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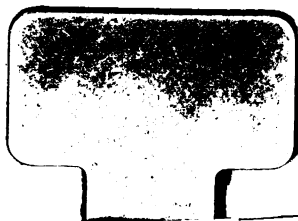
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THOUGHTS

ON THE

DEGRADATION OF SCIENCE

IN



ENGLAND.

By F.R.S.

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THOUGHTS

ON THE

DEGRADATION OF SCIENCE IN ENGLAND.

ABOUT sixteen years have elapsed since some men, distinguished by scientific attainments, undertook to prove the decline, low state, and slow progress of science and literature in England. Davy,¹ Herschel,² Babbage,³ South,⁴ Millingen the archæ-

¹ Consolations in Travel, dial. 5. Collected Works of Sir Humphry Davy, t. ix. p. 349. Memoirs of the Life of Sir Humphry Davy, by his brother, Dr. John Davy, i. p. 376; ii. p. 82. Preface of Babbage's Reflexions on the Decline of Science in England, p. vii.

² Treatise on Sound, in the "Encyclopædia Metropolitana," by J. F. K. Herschel. Preface of Babbage's Reflexions, p. viii.

³ Reflexions on the Decline of Science in England, and its Causes, by Charles Babbage. 8vo. London, 1830.

⁴ Reply to a Letter in the "Morning Chronicle," relative to the interest which the British Government evinces in Astronomical Science, by James South. 8vo. London, 1829. Charges against the President and Council of the Royal Society, by the same. 8vo. London, 1830.

ologist,¹ Wilkins the architect,² supported this opinion. And the "Quarterly Review," in an article relating to one of these publications, arrived at the following conclusion,—“Enough has been said to satisfy every lover of his country, that the sciences and arts of England are in a wretched state of depression, and that their decline is mainly owing to the ignorance and supineness of the Government, to the injudicious organization of our scientific boards and associations, and to the indirect persecution of scientific and literary men, by their exclusion from all the honours of the State.”³ “Whenever,” adds the same “Review” in another place, “the progressive cultivation of the human mind in the sciences, both mathematical and historical, does not receive the encouragement and protection from the State bestowed upon pursuits which lend their more immediate aid to the defence and government of the country, they cannot rise so high or advance so rapidly as where science is held in equal estimation with those professions, and receives an equal or not wholly disproportionate reward for its labours.”⁴ If these remarks were well founded in 1830, they are almost equally so in 1847. Science,

¹ On the State of Learning and the Fine Arts in England, by James Millingen. 8vo. London, 1831.

² On the Patronage of the Arts by the English Government, by William Wilkins. 8vo. London, 1832.

³ Quarterly Review, vol. xliii. p. 341.

⁴ Ibid. vol. xlv. p. 57.

indeed, and particularly applied science, has made great strides in the interval, and England has performed her part, not, however, by the aid of the Government, but in despite of that neglect and discouragement, which is little removed in its effects from persecution. Considerable additions have been made to those collections of books and antiquities, of natural history, and of works of art, which, by military conquest or the enlightened generosity of individuals, had before that time become the property of the public; and the State has been under the necessity of providing for their custody. But nothing has been done conducing directly to the encouragement of science in general; under which comprehensive term it is proposed, in the following pages, to include, not only the mathematical sciences, but literature also, and the fine arts. The protection and favour of the Crown is still bestowed only upon those pursuits which are immediately connected with the defence or government of the country, or with the promotion of wealth and luxury, without reference to intellectual cultivation or the advancement of knowledge. Science, however, ever has been, and ever will be, of too elastic a nature not to make progress under every discouragement; and hence the Royal Society, although no more than tolerated by the State, and viewed with a jealous eye by the Clergy, who consider every thing relating to public instruction as within their province, has been of considerable advantage to science,

and useful in this manner to the Government itself, as a powerful agent in the maintenance of order and morality, although receiving from the State no encouragement and little protection, and left to its own means for pecuniary support. But as the best institutions are attended with abuses, and in process of time become corrupted, either by the effect of an original fault or by the want of reforms adapted to new and unforeseen circumstances, it is not surprising that the Royal Society has followed the ordinary course of human inventions. As long as its expenditure was prudently managed, and its admissions were confined to really qualified persons, the Society not only protected but conferred some degree of dignity upon science. But when the state of its finances opened the door much wider to candidates—when Sir Joseph Banks, secure in his presidential chair, was not unwilling to augment the number of his subjects, and to consider rank and wealth as synonymous with philosophy, the title of F.R.S. gradually ceased to reflect any honour upon the bearer, and hardly remains an object of ambition to any but the medical practitioner or the engineer, who, raised by it above his professional competitors, may possibly derive some advantage from it. While the Society has increased in numbers, the sphere of its utility has diminished. It has long ceased to concern itself with any thing connected with letters; its incapacity to keep pace with the advancement of science has caused the establishment of separate societies for

the protection of its several great branches; and thus the original Society remains a decayed trunk, scarcely serving to connect the young plants which have sprung from its roots. Unless when a party is formed to assist or oppose the admission of a candidate, the meetings of the Royal Society are chiefly attended by those who have been previously assembled at the council or the club; and it seems now to owe the little which remains to it of interest or respectability to a few *conversazioni* which the President holds at his own house in the course of the town-season. But however agreeable and rational such *réunions* may be made by an accomplished President, anxious for the promotion of science, the scientific individual is not thereby relieved from that sense of degradation, of which he is perpetually reminded by the superior privileges granted to hereditary and official rank in the Royal Society as well as in the Universities. The entertainments are not given to men of science alone, but to all persons within the circle of the President's acquaintance; and as high rank is now almost an essential in the office of President, the company consists principally of the highest classes. The conspicuous persons at the President's evenings are the Ministers of State, the most noted members of the legislature, foreigners of distinction, and the stars and ribands of the public service; but as not many of these have derived assistance in attaining their elevated stations from any knowledge but that which is applicable to po-

litics, they have few motives of approximation to the votaries of science. In a country, therefore, where greater deference is paid to rank than to any other in Europe, Science finds itself more humiliated than honoured by the juxtaposition.

One of the writers above cited remarks, that the mathematical and physical sciences, by their intimate connexion with navigation, the military art, manufactures, and commerce, can never fail to extort some attention and encouragement from the Government, whenever the circumstances of the moment demand them, while "the intellectual sciences, which are not immediately lucrative, and whose only use is to enlarge the mind, improve the morals, and form the manners of a nation, are totally neglected. Hence the fine arts, so intimately connected with the moral sciences—hence various branches of learning, such as the study of grammar, criticism, etymology, history, antiquities, and all those which may be comprehended under the general name of philology, have been unnoticed or held in contempt. It may be said, in a word, that all relating to education and public instruction has been totally neglected."¹ Some, indeed, of the mathematical and physical sciences are so immediately applicable to our health, conveniences, and luxuries, as to receive great encouragement from the worldly

¹ Millingen, p. 2.

advantages which individuals derive from that application. But this is by no means the case with the sublimer branches or great sources of science, and still less with those of literature. Utilitarians and others of confined views are even disposed to dispute the necessity of a literary education, unless in a very confined sense, and would restrict that which is usually called learning to the clergy. But, as the illustrious Boeckh of Berlin lately remarked in a public discourse, in which he claimed, in the name of Science, from his despotic government, the privileges of thinking and writing,—“ Philology and archæology always have been and always must be the first elements in every system of polite education, and the foundation of all sound literature ;” nor can science make well-regulated advances without such a basis of instruction. Its consequences in the formation of the morals, manners, and character of a nation, are still more important—more important, even, than any of those branches of science to which this name is specifically given. George IV., desirous of giving to literature that protection which the Royal Society was supposed to give to science, established a Royal Society of Literature, and proved the earnestness of his intentions by granting from his privy purse 1100*l.* per annum ; 1000*l.* of which was an annual allowance to ten Royal Associates, elected by the Council of the Society. For a short time, and especially whenever there was question of the

election of a Royal Associate, the council was well attended by right honourables and right reverends, and there appeared some hope of encouragement to the Society from influential patrons ; but William IV., having unfortunately a family to provide for, withdrew the royal bounty, and the Society, although it has maintained an existence by the aid of private donations, is, in the sense of the royal founder, a manifest failure, and indeed, by the public in general, is scarcely known to exist. Like its elder sister, the Royal Society, it has been reduced to insignificance by the growth of societies which ought to have been its classes, such as the Numismatic, Philological, Archæological, and Syro-Phœnician ; its proceedings giving the same evidence as those of the Royal Society of the neglected state of science in general among the higher and more opulent classes of English society.

According to the writer just referred to, "the British Government seems to have been influenced by the principle that the bulk of mankind is only to be governed by the suppression and debasement of the intellectual faculties, and that the institutions of civil life rest for support upon the ignorance of the greatest part of those who live under them."¹ Assuredly there is no such avowed or ostensible principle in the British constitution ; but it is no less

¹ Millingen, p. 3.

true, that the degradation of science is an effect of that practical operation of the constitution, by which the Government has, ever since the Revolution, been placed in the hands of an oligarchy, who nominate the superintendents of the only kind of education acknowledged by the State. Such an oligarchy may not have been ill-adapted to the government of this country in some of the various phases of its social condition. Having represented the wealth, privileges, and interests of the whole body of an aristocracy, which possessed not only great privileges and a large portion of the property of the nation, but was strengthened by the traditional prejudices of the lower orders in its favour, and a willingness on their part to look up to it for examples of social life, it formed, like the oligarchy of Venice, a strong conservative government, powerful in preserving order and in protecting property, and a due administration of the laws ; and, under these favourable circumstances, the nation could not but make advances in power, opulence, and civilisation. But the patriotism of those who compose such a body was too naturally directed, above all, to the maintenance of their own power and the increase of their wealth, as we find most plainly demonstrated in some of the *Memoirs of the Order*.¹ It was a government which not only despised all science except that of

¹ Diary of the Baron of Melcombe-Regis. 8vo. Salisbury, 1784. Memoirs of James, Earl of Waldegrave, from 1754 to

politics, but could see nothing but danger to its own privileges and interests in the intellectual progress of the people. The march of science, therefore, was slow in the eighteenth century, and it often happened that when ministers, upon questions which they alone had the power of deciding, and upon which depended the future fortune and welfare of the nation, were in want of the councils of science, it was not to be found either among themselves or elsewhere within their knowledge. With the exception of Lord Chatham, who united the rare qualities of a commanding influence over obstructing colleagues to a keen perception of merit, and a determination to employ it in spite of the interested resistance of others, there was not a minister in the last century whose want of information upon important occasions was not attended with the most pernicious consequences to the nation.

Among the hereditary legislators who govern the country, there prevail certain maxims, founded in a spirit of selfishness and exclusion, which

1758. 4to. London. Correspondence of William, Earl of Chatham. 4 vols. 8vo. London, 1818. Memoirs of the last Ten Years of Geo. II., by Horace Walpole. 2 vols. 4to. London, 1842. Letters from Sir Horace Mann to Horace Walpole. 7 vols. 8vo. London, 1833-1843. Letters of Horace Walpole, from 1735 to 1797. 6 vols. 8vo. London, 1840. Memoirs of the Reign of Geo. III., by Horace Walpole. 4 vols. 8vo. London, 1845.

are most inimical to the higher branches of science and literature, as well as to the arts in general ; such as that none of these things require any protection beyond that of the patronage which may be bestowed upon them by the Crown, or by the nobility and the wealthy. Another is, that the employment of literary and scientific men in political stations interferes with their sublimer pursuits, which, on the other hand, would distract them, and render them less efficient as public servants : the necessary consequence of which maxim is, that as the rewards and favours of the Crown are reserved for those in its service, they are bestowed upon the oligarchy and its adherents, to the exclusion of science.

As in England wealth is indispensable to social distinction, and the pursuits of science are seldom very favourable to its accumulation, science is by this deficiency alone disqualified for the honours which emanate from the Crown. Upon Medical science alone has it been customary to bestow any but the lowest grade of civil rank : nor is it to their science that physicians are indebted for this distinction, but to their guineas. Law and Theology are well protected : the first, by its being the foundation of all political science ; the latter, by its sacred character, and the privileges derived from those ignorant times when the clergy were not only the exclusive

possessors of science and conductors of education, but often held also the reins of civil government. Those times, indeed, are gone by, but there still remains a prodigious advantage to Theology, above all other sciences, in the privilege enjoyed by the heads of the clergy in sitting without election in the Upper House of Parliament. For all other science the hereditary legislators affect to point out the Temple of Fame as the proper place of recompense, although by no means satisfied themselves with that reward alone, but considering solid emolument their due, as well as elevation in the social scale. The man of science may sometimes be found at the tail of a commission, which could not proceed without him ; but it is for the politician at the head that honour, profit, and promotion are reserved.

Another cherished maxim of hereditary legislators is, the public benefit which accrues from the employment of hereditary rank in high office at home and abroad, and particularly the importance of encouraging the members of noble families to enter the two great military branches of the public service. This is an excellent maxim for themselves, because it is necessarily accompanied by a preference in promotion over other classes, leading to the enjoyment by themselves of all the principal situations attended with authority, distinction, and emolument. The wars, however, and foreign pos-

sessions of Great Britain, having increased more rapidly than the peerage, it became necessary for the hereditary legislators, never averse from an alliance with wealth, to admit the nobility of *Regina Pecunia* to some of the benefits of a preference in promotion ; and hence the invention of saleable commissions, which placed all those not favoured by fortune still further in the background than they would otherwise have been, and added one more to the causes of the degradation of science. Nothing could have been more ingeniously contrived, had the object been to prevent the nation from being served by efficient officers, than the administration of the army at the commencement of the French Revolution ; one remarkable feature in which was the superior rank given to the Guards, while they were exempt from foreign service except when distinction was speedily to be gained in the field. Thus protected from various dangers which destroy life or health, and to which the service of England is more exposed than any other in Europe, they had every sort of advantage over the rest of the army in eligibility to command, except that of science and experience. The result of such a system, added to the deficiency of counsellors in the executive government possessing any theoretical or practical knowledge of war, caused a succession of failures and defeats, which at the end of the last century produced a feeling of despair that we should ever be able to face our great enemy in any ex-

tended field of war. It was not until dire necessity, and the experience acquired during long years of error and adversity, had corrected in some degree the vices of military administration, and produced a successful operation in the campaign of Egypt, that any confidence was entertained of our being able to oppose the great league against us by means of our army. The lessons of experience at length made their way even to the aristocracy. In process of time many of its members arrived at distinction—an advantage, however, which few of them could have acquired, had not the more rapid promotion which they had enjoyed given them the degree of rank, without which there can scarcely be any opportunity for distinction. It is to a fortunate coincidence of birth and talent, that the nation owes the most successful and one of the most able commanders of whom British history can boast. But to produce this example as a proof of the advantage of giving a more rapid advancement to the nobility, can only be justified by the assumption that they inherit the virtues of the founders of their families. Notwithstanding some illustrious exceptions, the effect of the general practice, which gives birth or wealth a preference in promotion over science, must infallibly be to confine the greatest knowledge and experience to subordinates, and to place in the most responsible situations men who may fill them very decently while there is nothing to call forth their powers, but who, when great

difficulties occur, are found to be utterly incompetent.

In the Navy, the effects of aristocratical promotion has been less pernicious than in other branches of the public service, in consequence of our insular position and large external empire, neither of which can be safe unless we have a navy capable of contending, not only with our rivals singly, but with a combination of them all. The interests at stake, being nothing less than those of the independent existence of Great Britain, are too important to be compromised to serve those of a particular class. The same severe necessity, therefore, which produced an improved administration of the army, has in all times maintained the navy in a less corrupt state; and, in particular, has supplied the casual deficiencies of judgment or knowledge at the head by an efficient council of well-informed assessors. In the navy, nevertheless, science and ability too frequently weigh lightly in competition with aristocratical influence.

But it is in the Military department of the Ordnance that science has been most remarkably degraded. Whenever the inadequacy of these branches of the service to the national defence have been felt, which, with an expanding field of war and a vast increase of foreign possessions, has been continually occurring since the commencement of the

war with France, an augmentation of numbers, without any change in the mode of promotion, has been the only remedy ; the consequence of which was, that officers continued to arrive at the superior ranks at too advanced an age, and that during the war captains often held commands which ought to have been in the hands of field-officers, while field-officers performed duties equivalent to those of generals in cavalry and infantry : clearly proving, that if a superiority of rank could have been useful in any branch of the service, it would have been in the Artillery and Engineers, not in the Guards. Another defect, arising from the same system of promotion, was, that superior officers were much more numerous than the service required, so that the system which debased the position of the active officer had not even the merit of being economical. Attempts have been made, and even the attention of Parliament has been drawn to the inconvenient construction of the military branch of the Ordnance, but aristocratical interests have been always sufficiently powerful to prevent any improvement of it. Hence the real value of an Ordnance commission, instead of being higher than that of a commission in the infantry, as it ought to have been, considering the acquirements necessary for its duties and their greater comparative importance, was found to be lower, when an experiment was made by the Government in the year 1823 to effect promotion in the Artillery and Engineers, by the offer of a sum

of money to the field-officers in exchange for their commissions at the infantry regulation price, that is to say, about fifty per cent below the sum *really* given in the line. The proposition was itself an affront and degradation to corps which had never experienced any thing of the commercial system of buying and selling commissions, and was the more discreditable to the Government, as the money was to be paid, not by the public, but by those upon whom this purchased rank was to be conferred. Nevertheless the offer was accepted by some officers, who thereby proved the real comparative value of commissions in the Ordnance and in the Line, but who soon had reason to repent of a bargain in which the knowledge of an important intention of Government was withheld from the seller, namely, that of making a very large promotion in the two corps, by removing all the officers having the rank of general; and thus those who accepted the retirement discovered, when too late, that they had parted with their freehold for one half of its value. Such an injustice could not have been inflicted upon any body of men but those who were at once the most scientific and the least aristocratic, and is a strong example of the degradation of science in the British army.

There cannot be a doubt that, from a neglect or insufficient sense of the importance of the Ordnance service on the part of the superior administration

of the army, have arisen many of those failures, doubtful advantages, or imperfect victories, which have attended the British arms, in a proportion very unworthy of the general devotedness and intelligence of the officer, and the admirable docility and courage of the soldier. India, by the possession of which we have become a great continental nation, requiring a military administration not inferior to that of others—India, as the only great field of war, except the Peninsula, on which England has been engaged during the last half century, has furnished the most remarkable instances of this neglect of the scientific branches in war, and which is the more to be lamented, as the expense of bringing effective numbers into the field is there enormously increased by climate and distance. In consequence of our inferiority in artillery at Assaye, in Gwalior, on the Sutledj, victories were obtained with difficulty, and by an enormous sacrifice of life, although on the one side were experience and perfect discipline, and on the other irregular forces and the war-councils of semi-barbarians. When we derive no advantage from superior science over such a foe—when there is no reliance for success but upon an extreme application of the national courage—when the superior weight and range of the enemy's artillery renders our own comparatively unserviceable—when the only remedy for such a disadvantage is the use of the bayonet, there cannot but be something wrong in the military system.

There may be commanders who consider such desperate conflicts as useful in proving to Orientals the irresistible qualities of British infantry, and as occasional examples, without which our native forces would never acquire the firmness and discipline which render them trustworthy guardians of our Oriental empire; and victories so obtained may cover the commanders who gain them with transcendent honour, but as a principle of military policy it is worthy only of the most unenlightened despotism. One of the first objects of civilisation ought to be to avoid war, and when it becomes inevitable, to reduce it to a science, of which one of the chief objects is the attainment of its ends with the least possible sacrifice of life. By pursuing an opposite route, we return to the times when the destructive engines, the effect of which has been to render wars more scientific and less sanguinary, were not yet invented; when every contest was decided *cominus et confertim*, and human life was a consideration of the smallest weight—one of the surest signs of barbarism.

In the “Persian Letters,” a work of fiction, descriptive of the manners of England towards the middle of the last century, by an eminent statesman of those times, we find the remark, that however customary it may be in other countries “to bestow employment on such persons as have particularly qualified themselves” for those offices—for example,

to "put the care of the army and marine into the hands of soldiers and seamen;" to "make one man a secretary of state because he has been bred in foreign courts, and understands the interests of neighbouring princes," or to entrust "the revenue to another because he is skilful in economy—we in England are above those vulgar prejudices. Such qualifications are not requisite among us. To be fit for any or all of these posts," it is only necessary "to be a good speaker in parliament."¹ Upon a conviction of this maxim of Lord Lyttelton the education of the intended statesman seems to be generally conducted. Like every other faculty requiring exercise more than natural genius, the art of public speaking is an acquirement not very difficult at an early age; and by the influence of the peerage in parliamentary elections, the son of the hereditary legislator has generally the immense advantage over others of an early opportunity of practising in the senate this only requisite to a successful career of politics. He may never be equal to the highest station in the ministry, in which eloquence must be combined with wisdom, and a rich store of knowledge derived from labour and experience, but with a due degree of confidence in himself, with some credit perhaps derived from a father's merit,² or with such other aid as birth and con-

¹ Works of George, Lord Lyttelton. 8vo. London, 1776. Vol. i. p. 274.

² "In public life, I have seen full as many men promoted

nexion may supply, he may, with a very moderate degree of natural talent, despise subordinate office unless as a stepping-stone, and aspire to a secondary post in the administration before he has arrived at the middle stage of life.

In the chances which attend the contests of party, it inevitably happens that, on the formation of a new ministry, the great departments of the State are frequently assigned to men little adapted to them by previous experience. In all that relates to the internal affairs of the nation, the defect may not often be of great importance, as these are subjects which are in some measure familiar to all, and which must have been continually forced upon the attention of the rising statesman by discussion in parliament. But in the foreign department the case is widely different. The Crown having to deal with despotic governments—despotic, at least, in comparison with our own—must in this particular branch of its prerogative be despotic also; the minister cannot allow himself to betray any sense of his own insufficiency, however conscious of it he may be; nor can he easily derive assistance from parliament or from public opinion:—from parliament, in deference to the secrecy which is constantly opposed to discussion on questions relating to foreign affairs, until, if the acts of the Govern-

for their fathers' talents as for their own."—LORD MAHON, *History of England*, vol. iv. p. 365.

ment happen to be detrimental to the public interests, the mischief is done ¹—from public opinion, in consequence of that general ignorance and neglect of such subjects, which is partly the result of our separation from the continent of Europe, but is mainly to be traced to defective education and the degradation of science. The minister who wields this irresponsible power, being the second in administration, has probably obtained his office by his talents as a debater and a tactician of party—not exactly the best school for the acquisition of that extensive knowledge of foreign countries, and of the character, condition, and interests of their people and governments, which are indispensable to the proper conduct of his office. Nevertheless, so much is the Executive of England a government of departments, that the council and management of the external concerns of the nation rest almost entirely in his hands, while his responsibility towards the nation, being shared with his colleagues, is individually reduced to little or nothing. The influence which

¹ “The effects of foreign policy are seldom perceived by the public until some months after the causes which have produced them have been put in operation; and, for the most part, not until the time when any inquiry into these causes is useless, except as affording the opportunity of holding them up to future statesmen, either for an example or a warning.”—STAPLETON’S *Political Life of the Right Honourable George Canning*, 3 vols. 8vo. London, 1831. vol. iii. p. 478. Mr. Stapleton had been Mr. Canning’s private secretary, and states in the Preface, that, by permission of Mr. Canning’s representative, he had “the freest reference” to his papers.

a Secretary for Foreign Affairs has the power of exercising "over the destinies of others, is of such magnitude, that upon it, accordingly as it is rightly or wrongly directed, the happiness or misery of the world may depend."¹

"A Secretary of State has travelled over Europe with the crown and sceptre of Great Britain, exercising the royal prerogatives, without the possibility of access to the Crown to give advice and to receive commands, and concluding his country by irrevocable acts without communicating with the other responsible advisers of the king an exercise of supreme power tending to the subversion of the fundamental principles of the British monarchy."²

We have seen another Secretary, whose employment in the State had been of a totally different kind from foreign affairs, but who, by dexterity in making the fluctuations of party subservient to his ambition, had lent his aid to his party so opportunely as to assume the conduct of foreign affairs with even less than the usual degree of control from them: this minister we have seen impressed with

¹ Stapleton, vol. iii. p. 477.

² Speech of Sir James Mackintosh on the Annexation of Genoa, April 27th, 1815. *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. i. p. 316. No wonder that Metternich lamented the loss of Lord Londonderry "as that of a brother."

the notion that it would be a glorious and profitable thing to overrun the central parts of Asia with British forces, and this he determined to attempt without waiting to inquire into the objections which Science might have to offer to such a project, or deigning to consider the destruction of life with which it would be attended, or the addition it would make to the financial burthens, already grievously oppressive to the nation. Science could have informed him that India possessed an excellent barrier against a foreign enemy, in the mountainous regions to the westward of the Indus and the thinly inhabited deserts beyond them: that while the people inhabiting this barrier were desirous only of friendly relations with us, there was an intermediate nation on our own frontier possessing a powerful army, organised by European rivals: that the latter nation had always been regarded by men of knowledge and experience as likely some day to become a formidable enemy: that however amicable our actual relations with this people then were, they depended upon the life of a man of advanced age and feeble health, and consequently that it was an object of the first importance, as well as in accordance with the most common principles of policy, to maintain a good understanding with the next neighbours of this power,—those neighbours, moreover, occupying a country of impracticable mountains, impervious to any enemy of Great Britain beyond it, who might have a design of penetrating

through it into India.¹ All these powerful motives for friendship and alliance with those who held the passes leading into the valley of the Indus from the north-west, were disregarded, perhaps never considered. The experiment was made, and a great military exploit was achieved, the most difficult that a British army ever accomplished, except that of extricating themselves from the situation in which rash and ignorant politicians had placed them, and had been so eager to place them, that they had forgotten the necessity of providing a second army for the custody of the passes of communication with the countries from which the first had advanced. The result was extreme disgrace to the nation and the total loss of a large division, commanded by one conscious of his own inefficiency, but placed in his unfortunate position by an effect of the vices of the supreme military administration.

The cruelty and treachery which led thousands of the native soldiers and subjects of Great Britain into climates inevitably fatal to the greater part of those whom the enemy spared—climates of which, when these soldiers enlisted, they knew not even the existence—the destruction of myriads of human beings and of the beasts which ministered to their

¹ All the reports on this question by those best qualified to judge, proved that an invasion of India by Russia ought, in all political calculations, to be regarded as unworthy of consideration.

conveyance, are but a portion of the cruel consequences of this great act of folly and wickedness. When the British forces had effected one of the most glorious retreats recorded in history, what was it but science relieving the misfortunes caused by the incompetence of statesmen? Even in this great military achievement, arbitrary power was not satisfied without degrading science, by causing the British forces to exhibit a wooden door as a trophy of their victory, and to escort it from Ghizni into India, for the purpose of placing it in a Hindu temple on the coast of Guzerat, from whence it was pretended that the Sultan Mahmúd of Ghizni had removed it in the year 1024.¹ Science could have informed Power on this occasion, that there is no historical evidence, nor any probability, of the removal of such a monument: that the door is of Mahometan workmanship, and had never been in India until it was pompously conveyed thither by the British forces.²

But the worst still remained. When an investigation was attempted in parliament, with the

¹ "You will bring away from the tomb of Mahmood of Ghuznee his club, which hangs over it, and you will bring away the gates of his tomb, which are the gates of the temple of Somnaut. These will be just trophies of your successful march."—*Instructions of Lord Ellenborough to General Nott.*

² Vide the Paper of Professor H. H. Wilson in the "*Asiatic Journal*," Third Series, vol. i. p. 44; and other papers in Third Series, vol. i. p. 262; Second Series, vol. xl. p. 167.

object of tracing the origin of these disgraces to the real authors, the rival oligarchies were agreed in refusing that satisfaction to the nation. Inquiries have been arrested in the same manner upon other occasions, but it has generally been when more ignoble interests were involved, such as that of the pecuniary delinquencies of a paymaster.¹ It is now proved, that even in the case of a great national calamity there is no such thing as ministerial responsibility. The proconsular office of Governor-general, and a step in the peerage, to which an Indian war is the surest road, will still be one of the great prizes offered to selfish ambition in the game of politics, and the utmost exertion of British valour, skill, and science, may again be required to repair the errors and ignorance of rulers.

Had Science held its proper station in society, had it been duly represented in the House of Commons, had the theological, the legal, and the various mental acquirements connected with domestic politics, which abound in the House of Lords, been enlightened by the science and experience of a few Elphinstones and Munros, the counsels which caused the expedition of Central Asia might have been overruled. It may be said, perhaps, that there was one among them abundantly furnished with the knowledge necessary to prevent such a

¹ Memoirs of the Reign of George III. by H. Walpole, vol. i. p. 243.

mischief, and that even the Duke of Wellington raised his voice against it in vain. But this proves only the uncontrollable power of the minister who happens to be in office. The Duke belonged to one of the two great parties, and their indulgence to each other in maintaining patronage, privilege, and irresponsibility, has already been adverted to. The Duke, moreover, held several high offices, and it is his principle upon all occasions "not to impede the carrying on of the Queen's Government." A few men of knowledge and experience, therefore, independent of place and party, free from the innate prejudices and interests of the order, and well informed upon subjects upon which great sedentary landowners cannot be otherwise than comparatively ignorant, would have had on such a question greater weight than that of any hereditary legislator.

The secondary importance of the foreign relations of Great Britain in the estimation of the legislature and the public, while those of continental nations interest their Governments, above all other matters of state, is a circumstance not a little detrimental to a due administration of the foreign affairs of England. With those Governments the same necessity exists for an efficient management of the foreign department, as in England for that of the navy.

Hence it often happens, that in our transactions

with foreign courts there are on one side the wisest and most experienced counsellors in Europe treating of vital interests, on the other a person recently placed in his office by accident, and depending for information upon his subordinates abroad, of whom the highest are movable like himself, by the chances of domestic politics, and the lower and more experienced, not unfrequently occupied in a blind obedience to instructions, of which they in conscience disapprove. Under such circumstances, and with changes of ministry so frequent that the nation could not benefit by the services of a Malmesbury at the head of foreign affairs for more than a short time, it is not wonderful that England scarcely ever follows a steady, consistent, intelligible course of foreign policy, or that she proverbially loses by negotiation as much as she gains in the field of battle, and seldom obtains any advantage whatever but by the strength of her purse. It is not that the management of her foreign relations is in reality of little importance to her; on the contrary, the immense extent of her foreign dependencies and her supremacy at sea, which place her in contact with every maritime nation on the globe, render all questions of foreign policy of an importance scarcely inferior to any other. A single erroneous line in her external policy may lead, and has led, to destructive wars and financial difficulties, of which the ultimate effect is to deprive her of that consciousness of an ability to resort to arms, which is the only true

foundation of success in negotiation, and to load her subjects with taxes, which end in reducing the lowest classes to a standard of miserable existence, not better than in those unhappy countries where they are exposed to invading armies, forced contributions, and those other grievances from which England, by her insular position, is naturally exempt. Experience, therefore, and information—in short, science, is as much required in conducting the foreign affairs of Great Britain, as of any of the other nations of Europe; while her geographical separation from them tends to make that science more available for her welfare, by giving her the means in many cases of simplifying the motives of her conduct, and thus relieving herself from the necessity of resorting to that more refined diplomacy, the greater necessity for which in continental states leads to their superior skill in its exercise. Although England lies too near to the Continent to pursue her own interests, and promote those of her citizens, so independently and selfishly as the United States of America, some advantage of the same kind is a privilege conferred upon her by Nature, which ought not to be neglected by her rulers as if they were unconscious of it. It seems not impossible for her, while intent on preserving the ordinary relations of civilised intercourse, and while anxious to maintain a good understanding with all nations, to avoid interference with the conflicting interests of continental govern-

ments, unless when they immediately affect herself,¹ and to pursue an honourable and consistent course, as the friend of peace, of free institutions, and of the progressive improvement of other nations, as one of the best auxiliaries to her own prosperity. The history of the last war shews, that all Europe combined could not force us to recede from such a course; while it is equally evident, from more recent experience, that little reliance is to be placed upon general treaties, when interest or ambition tempts any of the continental powers to evade them; that, sooner or later, these axioms of foreign policy will prove fallacious and delusive; and that it will not unfrequently happen, that in adhering to them the success of British negotiation will be in an inverse proportion to its honesty of purpose.

At the close of the Revolutionary War, when the perseverance of Great Britain, and the efforts of some of the people of Europe, had restored its sovereigns to independent power; and when the latter, instead of shewing gratitude to those people, made the recent example of France a pretext for a reaction in favour of irresponsible monarchy; England, instead of resuming her position in the civilised world as the friend of freedom, preferred a station in the rear-ranks of despotism, and made a

¹ Mr. Canning seems to have been sensible of the wisdom of this maxim, but not until he had been two years in office. Stapleton, vol. i. p. 489; ii. p. 36. Debate of February 3, 1824.

retrograde movement, which was not only contrary to the interests and wishes of her people, but left them exposed in some special instances to the imputation of a treacherous abandonment of promises or engagements. Nor was the successor of the minister for foreign affairs, to whose counsels these results are chiefly to be ascribed, much better qualified than his predecessor for that department of the executive when he entered upon office. Although gifted in an eminent degree with those peculiar talents, which in England lead to the highest station, he appears to have had little of the judgment and prudence, and still less of the peculiar knowledge and experience, required in his new position.¹ His three principal acts were,—his acquiescence in the invasion of Spain by the French, the establishment of the Spanish American republics, and the treaty of London relating to Greece.

In regard to the first, it is probable that a course of submission to the policy of the Holy Alliance had been followed too long to allow him suddenly to diverge from it so soon after his accession to office. As to his two later measures, we may safely give credit to their having arisen from the liberality inseparable from his powerful mind and generous character, though it is now too evident that he was deficient in information or foresight, when he ex-

¹ *Diaries and Correspondence of the Earl of Malmesbury*, vol. iv. pp. 169, 367, 407.

pected to find the materials of republican self-government in the corruptions of Spanish colonial rule, and in the ignorant disciples of an intolerant and superstitious church. Thirty years' experience have sufficiently shewn the fallacy of his views.

In the greatest of those republics, we have the capital inconvenience of a weak and unmanageable ally, continually threatened with the encroachment of a powerful and ambitious neighbour,—an alliance similar to that which oppresses our policy in Eastern Europe, but with the greater disadvantage of having to deal in Mexico with more corrupt, less honest, and more cunning semi-barbarians, who, as well as the other Spanish republicans, still continue to defraud the English creditors, to whom they were in great measure indebted for their independence, and Mr. Canning for his self-laudation in establishing it; while the British Government, as long as it considers inexpedient any hostile demonstrations in favour of these claims of its subjects, is reduced to the necessity of virtually encouraging the debtors in their dishonest purposes.

The treaty of London, the closing act of Mr. Canning's "system of foreign policy," was an act still more fraught with evil consequences, as it related to a country not separated from us by the broad Atlantic, and which claimed our especial attention as a new member of the European family.

Of all the arguments tending to shew that hereditary legislation is adverse to the progress of human improvement, Greece affords one of the strongest. It shews, also, how far more dear to such a privileged order are the interests of unenlightened despotism, having the slightest pretensions to legitimacy, than those either of science or religion.

The Greeks, having never been completely conquered by the Turks, having never been nationally united with them, having never been admitted to an equality of privileges, but, on the contrary, having been subjected, as an inferior race, to the most cruel vexations, from which their only relief was a renouncement of their religion, had a right to expect that the Christian powers of Europe would have regarded their insurrection as a remnant of that contest between the two nations which had been suspended, not terminated, in the fifteenth century, by the prevalence, at that time, of the Crescent over the Cross, in despite of the Christian powers, and by the conquest of the Greek capital. When, in the nineteenth century, the authority of the Sultan had become so feeble as to be unable to protect his Christian subjects against his own Mahometan officers, the Christians had a clear right to take measures for protecting themselves. When, composing nine-tenths of the population of Greece Proper, they had expelled their oppressors from the greater part of their territory, they had just reason

for expecting to be acknowledged by the Christian powers as a nation. As a mere question of international law, the decision would have been in their favour, if reference had been made to the enlightened classes of Europe, instead of to sovereigns and their ministers. By a joint interference of the Allied Powers, the contest might have been arrested, and the future welfare of the Christian subjects of Turkey secured, even without any infringement of that visionary axiom—the integrity of the Ottoman empire, had the Christian powers agreed in binding the Turks by a treaty, to grant to their Christian subjects security of person and property, with the free exercise of their religion, and in rendering the Turks answerable for the observance of those engagements to the combined mediators and their agents in Turkey. The Greeks would have hailed such an arrangement at that time with joy and gratitude, and it was the more easy, as imperfect conquest and religious persecution had combined to maintain the two races in a state of separation, and had preserved the nationality of the Greeks, together with the municipal customs which they had derived from remote antiquity.

The nuisance of the French empire having been put an end to by the joint efforts of the sovereigns of Europe, their next duty was to mitigate, if it was impossible to abate, another nuisance, for such Turkey had become by its

weakness and misgovernment, and by the antagonism in religion, manners, and policy, which rendered it an unfit member of the European family, and a constant cause of excitement to war. A great part of the evils likely to result from these inconveniences would have been obviated by an united effort of the Congress of Vienna in favour of the Christian subjects of Turkey ; and it was the right and duty of England, who had been a main instrument in restoring the sovereigns to power, and as founding her fame on a love of freedom and popular improvement, to have led the way on this occasion. Or if such an effort of wisdom and humanity was too much to be expected so soon after the triumphs of a sanguinary war, and the restoration of hereditary despotism, England might at least have abstained from joining the Holy Alliance in persecuting the Greeks, when, six or seven years afterwards, they were engaged in resisting their oppressors.

If it suited the Holy Alliance to put up with the insult which the Turks offered to all Christian Europe, when they hanged the Greek patriarch, and put many others of the higher clergy to death, at Constantinople, on Easter Sunday, of the year 1821, and when they proceeded to destroy Greek churches and to murder Greek priests, together with many other defenceless and unoffending Greek subjects in various parts of the empire ; if the Allied

Sovereigns disregarded the claims of the Greeks, as descendants from those from whom modern civilisation is derived, and as an industrious people, zealous in the cause of education, and, above all, as possessing a superiority of energy and enterprise over their barbarous enemy, which proved them, not less than their language, to be true descendants of the Hellenic race; if all these were not recommendations to the commiseration of the powerful of Europe; if, on the contrary, the Holy Alliance viewed the Greek insurrection with particular dislike, as having a tendency to excite a taste for ancient literature, and promote that enlargement of the bounds of knowledge and civilisation which is the greatest enemy to the despotic power derived from barbarous times; if, in conformity with these views, the Holy Alliance found it convenient to class the Greek insurrection with the contemporaneous struggles of the Italians and Spaniards for the improvement of their Governments, and to consider them all as a conspiracy against themselves, it little became England to concur in such an odious policy, and, by acquiescing in the acts of the Congress of Verona, to become a consenting party to the extermination of the Greeks: for to nothing less those acts tended, when the Allied Sovereigns refused any audience whatever to the Greek deputation, treated the insurrection as an unjustifiable rebellion against a legitimate brother

sovereign, and denounced the conduct of the Greeks to Europe as "rash and culpable;"¹ thus encouraging the Turks to persevere in carrying on the war according to their own sanguinary system, of which they had recently given examples in the indiscriminate massacre of the Greeks of Cyprus, Scio, and other places, and in the murder of Greek hostages at Constantinople, in defiance of the remonstrances of the British ambassador. At the same moment when, at the suggestion of Great Britain, the Allied Sovereigns were making a declaration against the trade in African negroes, they consigned the Greeks to the alternative of death or slavery. And, accordingly, it was not long before whole families of Greeks, not captives in battle, but the plunder of peaceable communities, were publicly sold in the markets of Constantinople, Smyrna, and Alexandria; so that Greeks, of both sexes, were to be found for several years in a state of slavery in various parts of the Ottoman empire. By the presence of the Duke of Wellington at the Congress of Verona,² England

¹ In a Circular from Verona, dated the 14th December, 1822.

² "Would to God," exclaims Mackintosh, "that from the beginning we had kept aloof from Congresses, in which we have made shipwreck of our ancient honour. If that were not possible, would to God that we had protested by silence and absence from the conspiracy at Verona, which has annihilated the liberties of continental Europe."—MACKINTOSH'S *Misc. Works*, iii. p. 455.

sanctioned its proceedings, and became a servant of the Holy Alliance, in a measure wherein the honour of England, her interests, and those of humanity, as well as the liberal wishes and feelings of her own people, were opposed to their decisions.

The regeneration of the Greeks was particularly to be desired by England, as bringing into the European system an industrious people in an important position, and most desirable as allies, because more than any other in Europe a maritime people. The sea, which had been the great cause of their superiority over all the nations of antiquity,¹ the sea, which has equally advanced Great Britain beyond modern nations, as far as the Gothic institutions common to all have permitted,² formed a natural bond of union between the two people.

From the time when the modern Greeks, in spite of Ottoman oppression, had become, by the effects of education and commercial industry, more enlightened than their oppressors, and were thus approaching to the civilisation of their fellow

¹ Cicero, de Republica, ii. 4.

² "The Edinburgh Review," vol. lxxxiv. p. 480, *seq.* affords some curious examples of the contrast in the last century between the prosperity of maritime commerce and the Gothic tardiness of advancing science, as instanced in the imperfection of internal communication.

Christians of Western Europe, they had not ceased to look up to England as the country whose friendship alone was necessary to their obtaining some amelioration of their unhappy condition under a barbarous master. To encourage this feeling, and to aid the nation in its progress, was a duty in England, when she consented to become the protectress of a portion of it in the Ionian Islands,—a position of no advantage adequate to the expense which it entailed, unless as a point of observation, where we might be in readiness to act, according to circumstances, in case of any events tending to the dissolution of the Ottoman empire. Statesmen little acquainted with those countries may be excused, perhaps, for not having foreseen that the dissolution might begin by the revolt of the most enlightened and numerous of the Christian subjects, in the province where the Turkish authority was weakest; but to those who had been at the trouble of inquiring into the state of Turkey, its geography and history, and the condition and character of its various people of the Christian faith, this could not have been a very unnatural anticipation. On the supposition of any future aggression on Turkey, by one or both of the great Christian powers bordering on her northern frontier, the maritime resources of Greece, directed by our navy, would have strengthened Turkey against her natural enemies—would have become an element for the preservation of peace in the south-east of Europe; and if the Turks should lose Con-

stantinople, would at least have saved Asia Minor for them. The year 1822, the very year of the Congress of Verona, was the moment most favourable for acknowledging the nationality of the Greeks, as they were then masters of the greater part of Candia, as well as of Continental Greece. At the same time, it was hardly possible to suppose that, with their destitution of means, opposed to the resources and military establishments of an extensive empire, they could be successful in a protracted contest. A declaration at that time in favour of the Greeks would have met with the approbation of all enlightened classes, as well in England as in Europe in general; and if accompanied by a notice that, until an arrangement could be made for the pacification of the two people, no acts of hostility by sea, in the liberated portion of Greece, or the islands where no Turkish authorities existed, would be permitted (the same measure, in short, which was at last resorted to when half the population of Greece had been destroyed), it would of necessity have been acquiesced in by the Turks, as soon as they became convinced that they could obtain no essential aid in resisting us. Neither Austria nor Russia could have objected to such an act, but as it tended to the support of Turkey against themselves; in fact, Russia had already made strong demonstrations in favour of the Greeks, and had withdrawn her ambassador

from Constantinople, mainly upon that question, in July 1821. France, whom, after having conquered, we had helped to become once more our rival, would have had no right to expect that we should listen to her objections, when she had just obtained the sanction of the Holy Alliance to her subjugation of Spain. But, in truth, subsequent events have clearly shewn, that throughout the difficulties which arose from the Greek insurrection, England was expected, and at length was urged, by the other powers to take the lead in putting an end to them. Nothing, however, seems to have been further from the wishes of the British Government than a termination of the war favourable to the Greeks. Even before the successful progress of the insurrection had excited the anger and fears of the Holy Alliance, the English cabinet was sufficiently disposed to shew a preference to the Turkish cause, partly from an innate aristocratical leaning to the interests of power, and partly from an opinion, founded in ignorance, that to favour Greece was to strengthen Russia against Turkey. As early as 1821, our position in the Ionian Islands was made subservient to the injustice and cruelty of forcing the expatriation of the entire Greek republic of Parga, for the purpose of giving up the place to the Turks, without any necessity for this preference of barbarous despotism to industrious freedom, since the question of right having been left entirely doubtful by the

Congress of Vienna, and open to a procrastinated negotiation, actual possession gave us the power of deciding the question as we pleased.

In the same year, which was the first of the Greek insurrection, the British ambassador at Constantinople, and the Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, directly aided the Turks against the insurgents, and the latter almost as effectually, by his mode of interpreting the neutrality, which he was at length directed to observe. Mr. Canning acknowledged that, "from the extraordinary nature of the wars then prevailing, cases continually arose to which the technical principles of neutrality were scarcely applicable without some modification ;"¹ but that which he adopted towards the Greeks was the most rigid kind of armed neutrality consistent with the commonest claims of humanity, and, of course, was as favourable to the *ancient ally* as it was destructive to their gallant, weak, and destitute opponent, whose friends could reach him by sea only, while land and sea were open to the Turks. The export of arms from England was forbidden, with a view to this contest ; and the Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, in order to prevent the proximity of the Islands from serving to facilitate succour to the insurgents, resorted to the violent measure of disarming the islanders.

¹ Ap. Stapleton, vol. ii. p. 391.

It was in vain that the Greeks, hopeless of making any impression on the despotic sovereigns of Europe, and unable to believe, when they had the strongest proofs of the sympathy of the people of England, that the Government was guided by an opposite policy, repeatedly applied to us, demonstrating that their insurrection had nothing in common with those of Italy and Spain: that they sought only a deliverance of their country and religion from servitude: that they were not contending against a mother-country, like the Spanish-Americans, or, formerly, the Anglo-Americans, but desirous only of obtaining the means of following the peaceable pursuits of agriculture, commerce, and navigation; and that they were resolved to perish in the contest, rather than to return to slavery under their inferiors in civilisation. But these appeals were quite unheeded by the British minister, who continued to reply to the remonstrances made in Parliament in favour of the Greeks, that we had no right to interpose between the Turks and their subjects, and that those who recommended interference wished to lead England into a war,¹ though it would have been difficult to shew that hostilities with any people but the Turks could possibly have been the result of the interposition of England at this juncture. Nothing can more strongly shew that it is in the nature of the materials of which the executive of

¹ Speech of the Marquis of Londonderry, debate of 22d July, 1822.

this country is constituted, to prefer the interests of established power to those of popular improvement, than that the chiefs of both the great parties, into which the aristocracy was divided, were adverse to intercession in favour of the Greeks—the lords Grey and Melbourne, not less than lord Liverpool, lord Castlereagh and the Duke of Wellington—and that Mr. Canning, on succeeding to the conduct of foreign affairs in September, 1822, adopted implicitly the unjust and fallacious arguments of the Holy Alliance against the Greeks, conceived by the sovereigns in a malignant and cowardly spirit of despotism, but embraced, probably, by him in an ignorance of the real merits of the question, caused by a want of information or judgment, of which the result was the total failure of the object for which he sacrificed the Greeks—that of preventing a separate war between Turkey and Russia. Mr. Canning even went beyond his official predecessor in hostility to the Greeks, by adding to the arguments of the Holy Alliance against them, the frivolous pretext that it would be unbecoming in England, as ruling over millions of Mahometans in India, to side with Christians in a religious war in Europe.¹ It was to no purpose, therefore, that on the 2d of August, 1825, the executive officers, the clergy, the deputies of the people, and the military authorities of the Greeks, solemnly placed their “liberty, na-

¹ Stapleton, vol. i. p. 198.

tional independence, and political existence," under the protection of Great Britain, upon the ground of her greater ability to protect them, and particularly upon that of her possessing islands and great military and naval establishments in the immediate vicinity of the scene of action. When we thus refused the protectorship, Russia was still threatening the Porte with war, in support of the Greeks; and France was too evidently engaged in projects of aggrandisement in the Mediterranean, not to render it an object of the first importance to us to anticipate her in a quarter so important to her designs as Greece. Nor would the one have been furnished thereby with any excuse for hastening the execution of her views upon the Ottoman empire, or the other have been deterred from her long-cherished intention of extending her power over the southern shores of the Mediterranean. But, in fact, so far from these or the other great powers having prevented England from interposing in favour of the Greeks, it is certain that "the annihilation of the Holy Alliance," which Mr. Canning believed that he had completed by the recognition of the independence of Spanish America at the beginning of the year 1825, was immediately followed by the avowal of Russia and France, that "they looked to the British Government for a solution of the complications arising out of the Greek quarrel."¹ It is equally certain, that at

¹ Stapleton, vol. iii. pp. 291, 293.

St. Petersburg, in the spring of the same year, the Austrian Government recommended to the adoption of the allies "a recognition of the independence of Greece."¹ And again, in the following October, two months after the Greeks had vainly solicited our protection, "the Austrian, French, and Russian Governments had separately expressed their wishes to Mr. Canning that he would take the question into his own hands, since Great Britain was the only power which could bring the state of affairs in Greece to a satisfactory settlement."²

Even so early as the autumn of 1822, the Emperor Alexander, while personally governed by his fear of the effects which the movement in favour of liberty in Spain and Italy, as well as in Greece, might have upon his own subjects, gave the greatest encouragement to England to interfere in Greece, by expressing to lord Strangford his conviction that "public opinion in England would compel the British ministry to take the state of Greece into consideration ; that the question would become, like that of the slave-trade, one of strong national feeling ; and that he preferred therefore waiting for any measures which the British Government might originate to taking the lead in proposing to the allies any plan for improving the political state of Greece."³ The emperor declared, at the same time, that it was his

¹ Stapleton, vol. iii. p. 262.

² Ibid. vol. ii. p. 437.

³ Ibid. vol. i. p. 212.

wish to see the Greeks placed on the same footing as the inhabitants of Servia or Wallachia ; and, in conformity with this opinion, a memoir was presented in January 1824, to the ministers of the Allied Powers at St. Petersburg, proposing the division of Continental Greece into "three principalities similar to those of the Danube ; the islands of the Ægean being left to a municipal form of government, which would be no other than a renewal and regulation of the privileges originally enjoyed by them."

This proposal was accompanied by an intimation that Russia could not long avoid an active interference in the contest, on account of the impatience of the Russian army and people,¹ who thus had greater influence upon its despotic government in this question, than the free people of England upon theirs. It shewed, also, how much better the Russians understood the matter ; for, undoubtedly, some modification of this scheme would have been better for both the contending parties than the *independence* of a small portion of Greece. If some degree of violence on the part of the Allied Powers might have been necessary to make either party submit to their decision, it would have been no more than was afterwards found necessary in arriving at a conclusion, by which the allies violated

¹ Stapleton, vol. ii. p. 415 ; iii. p. 275.

their own favourite maxim of Oriental policy, namely, the necessity of maintaining the Ottoman empire in its integrity.

It was not until October 1825, that Mr. Canning was made thoroughly sensible of the horrible conclusion to which his policy tended, when Prince Lieven informed him that the Porte had placed at the disposal of Ibrahim Pacha whatever part of Greece he might conquer, and that Ibrahim's intention was "to remove the whole Greek population, carrying them off into slavery in Egypt or elsewhere, and to re-people the country with Egyptians and others of the Mahometan religion. So monstrous and extravagant a plan appeared to Mr. Canning incredible," until its truth was confirmed from other quarters. To no one, however, well acquainted with the history and manners, the bigotry and cruelty, of the Turks, could such a determination have appeared inconsistent with their ordinary system of warfare, when carried to an extreme by the resistance of Christian subjects, or as anything but the natural result of such a contest. Nevertheless, "two additional years of ravage and bloodshed had fruitlessly desolated Greece,"¹ before Mr. Canning consented to abandon that system of neutrality which had deprived Greece of half its population, had left nothing of property but

¹ Canning ap. Stapleton, vol. iii. p. 262.

the land, had reduced the people to anarchy, and had driven them in that state to some last desperate efforts by sea, which Neutrality construed into acts of piracy, although Austrians, Ottomans, and Egyptians were, at the same moment, united in powerful array against them. "Ibrahim Pacha still continued, wherever the Greeks of the Morea made the slightest resistance, to massacre all the male adults, and to send the women and children into slavery in Egypt."¹ But "Christian Europe would no longer tolerate" such iniquities. It was at length considered "lawful to interfere, for the sake of protecting a whole Christian people from extermination."² The treaty of London was signed, and the interpretation of the obscure instructions which followed it was fortunately left to a profession, too ready to find a reason for engaging in battle, not to be easily convinced that it was required and justified by the instructions. Nothing less, in fact, could have overcome Turkish obstinacy.

Our refusal of the protectorship of Greece in 1826, placed it in the hands of Russia in 1827; for such was virtually the effect of the election of her former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Capo-

¹ Stapleton, vol. iii. p. 283.

² Canning ap. Stapleton, vol. ii. p. 481; vol. iii. p. 470.

distria, to the Presidency. Relieved thereby from all apprehensions of a new power in Greece adverse to her extension in Turkey, Russia was encouraged to that meditated invasion which waited only for the signing of the treaty of London to be carried into effect, and by which she proved to the world how easy it is for her to march to Constantinople.

The twenty years which have since elapsed have shewn how much more advantageous the treaty of London has been to the interests of despotism than to those of humanity and improvement. The Greeks, divided into subjects of a Mussulman and of a German prince, are prevented from ever becoming a strong and independent nation, much less a new Hellas of literature and civilisation. Nothing could have been better calculated to retard the improvement of the liberated portion of Greece than to make it a dependency of an inland kingdom, which is the reverse of Greece, in all the circumstances of geographical position and of the interests and occupations thence arising, and to give to its inhabitants a monarchical government—a mockery in their abject state of poverty, and which required them to incur a heavy debt, as well as to act with dishonesty towards the creditors who had assisted them in their struggle for liberty, and to whom the lands of Greece had been pledged as security. Under a German regency they became “vile bodies” for the political “experiments” of German pedantry,

while the customs and institutions, which had survived the wreck of ancient civilisation, and the cherishing and improving of which formed the only rational means of bringing Greece into order, were despised and thrown aside, or rendered ineffectual by arbitrary alterations.¹

The Greeks, instead of seeing their commerce encouraged by loans and immunities, their empty pastures stocked, their land restored by cultivation, their ruined buildings renewed, or communication improved by roads, had the mortification to see their borrowed money devoured by foreigners or expended in a palace for a sovereign; while, to meet the interest of their new debt, they have been more heavily taxed than in the days of their Turkish servitude, and are left without a hope that there will ever be a superfluity of national means, applicable to the hastening of national improvement. The non-increase of the population of liberated Greece by immigration from the Turkish provinces,

¹ The constitution of a state must in all countries arise out of the character and situation of the people. The attempt, always ineffectual, to change by violence the ancient habits of men, and the established order of society, so as to fit them for an absolutely new scheme of government, flows from the most presumptuous ignorance, requires the support of the most ferocious tyranny, and leads to consequences which its authors can never foresee—generally, indeed, to institutions the most opposite to those of which they profess to seek the establishment.—MACKINTOSH'S *Miscell. Works*, vol. i. p. 375.

proves alone how successful have been the councils of those who are adverse to the advancement of the nation in prosperity, and whose perseverance has had the success which is proverbial in human affairs. To expect the tranquil working of a representative constitution under such a disproportion of liabilities to means, as that which now oppresses the Greeks, is to expect what is scarcely within the bounds of possibility; nor is it easy to conceive that, while the representatives of the European powers are engaged in a contest among one another for the influence of their respective sovereigns, without any union of views beneficial to the newly organised people, or that, while thus cherishing the factious disposition which has always been the reproach of the Greek character, they can be much better than apostles of discord.

By the treaty of London, England not only gave up that superior influence which belonged to her, as well by the inclinations of the people as by her maritime ascendancy and her position in the Ionian islands, but she assisted the French in obtaining it. France having already acquired great credit among the Greeks by the assistance afforded to them during the contest, took immediate advantage of the right acquired by the treaty of London to augment that influence, by sending an army to the Peloponnesus, which, if it had not all the effect contemplated by those who sent it,

was useful to the liberated Greeks in perfecting their separation from Turkey; while the scientific mission which accompanied the army performed a most important service to the Greeks, by making known to them the geography, natural history, and physical resources of their country. France thus took the lead in acquitting a small part of the debt which modern Europe owes to the ancestors of this people, and thus acquired a credit, the more valuable, as it forms an advantageous contrast to the contempt with which England has treated such considerations.

The separation of the liberated Greeks from the much larger portion of the nation, which remains under the Turkish yoke, has retarded the progress of education and improvement among the latter. If this retrograde movement in the interest of barbarism has slightly strengthened the Turkish authority, which is very doubtful, it has been weakened in a much greater degree by the policy which took away Syria from the Viceroy of Egypt to place it in the feeble hands of the Sultan.¹ In what manner a measure attended with great destruction of human life and infinite misery, and which has augmented the political disorders of Syria, has

¹ "The immediate result" (of our interference between the Porte and Mehmed Ali), has been to add to the weakness of the Porte by adding to it the burden of possessions it could hardly of late years retain, and never could govern, but through

contributed to "the balance of power in Europe, and to the peace of the world in general;" or what is the nature of that "long view of things," which the author of the war boasts of having taken when he entered upon it, has not been, and perhaps never can be, explained.¹

The proverbial uncertainty of political predictions renders it idle to speculate upon the probable duration of the forbearance of the Christian powers bordering upon Turkey, or as to how long a spirit of mutual jealousy may have the effect of maintaining the Sultan on his throne as a legitimate brother, whose dominions are to be upheld in their nominal integrity; but however lasting may be the effects of this harmony, there seems to be a physical cause in operation, sufficient ultimately to disturb it, namely, the rapid increase of the population of Northern Europe, the impossibility of keeping pace with it by maritime emigration, and that which cannot be considered as an unnatural consequence, the moving forward of the northern nations to occupy the comparatively empty countries to the south, as in the time of the decline of

the means of Mehmet Ali; and to impede the gradual progress of improvement, social and commercial, along the whole southern coast of the Mediterranean."—LORD NUGENT, *Lands Classical and Sacred*, vol. i. p. 200.

¹ Speech of Lord Palmerston at the dinner given by the Reform Club to Ibrahim Pacha, on the 3d July, 1846.

the Roman Empire.¹ When such an event occurs, when naval powers from both sides of the Atlantic are united against England, or when our colonies drop off from the mother-country, we may regret that we have lost the opportunity of creating a new naval ally, of promoting his prosperity,² and of obtaining a more effectual influence in Greece than now seems possible without a war.

It is said, that the British House of Peers is the wisest as well as the most wealthy body of men that the civilised world has ever seen. In no equal numbers can there be found greater natural and acquired accomplishments, or so great a proficiency in those branches of knowledge, which peculiarly appertain to the Science of Government. But in proportion as these are cultivated, those which con-

¹ "If our dependencies are ill-governed, we shall lose them. If they are well governed, the natives will rise in wealth, knowledge, and importance. They will demand their share in the administration of the country, and in time that share will amount to nearly the whole. This is already the case in Canada; it will soon be the case in all the other American possessions, and ultimately it must take place even in India."—*Edinburgh Review* of "Lewis on the Government of Dependencies," No. 168, vol. lxxxiii. p. 552.

² At the time of the liberation of Greece, so great was the disposition in England to invest capital in the land, that, had Greece enjoyed the protection of Great Britain, there would have been many large English estates in Greece before this time.

stitute the basis of all education and of all mental and moral advancement, the mathematical sciences and ancient literature, are inevitably neglected. The education of a class so distinguished by property and privilege, cannot but resemble that of princes in general, both in its advantages and defects. It is for the most part in the hands of a clergy, looking forward to their pupils for their own promotion, and who, however well qualified, assiduous, and conscientious they may be, have little power to enforce diligence in study upon those who can never be made subject to that strict discipline which is necessary to give the various dispositions of youth an equal chance of mental improvement. The total inefficiency of instruction at English Universities, upon idle or unwilling recipients, has been too often proved to render it surprising that the education of the higher classes in this country should generally be more imperfect than that of great numbers of those whom they are destined by their birth to govern. At too early an age the hereditary legislator begins to practise the profession to which he is born ; or if he defers it for a few years, for the purpose of taking a superficial view of foreign lands, he seldom adds much thereby to his scientific education, or to his love of Science. When he has once entered on the parliamentary career which is to gratify his ambition, and to form the great employment of his life, he naturally neglects all science,

but that which is found useful in the conduct of public affairs. It is well if he have not conceived a disgust for that which has given him much ineffectual trouble in his youth, or a contempt for that from which little immediate advantage is to be derived. He cannot but discover, at the same time, that Science in general is a formidable rival to the Science of Government, as well in public estimation as in its effects upon society. Instead of feeling disposed, therefore, to raise Science to his own privileged level, he is more desirous of keeping it in its subordinate and merely tolerated position.

It will be thought, perhaps, that in arriving at this conclusion, the power of the popular branch of the legislature in correcting the effects of a hereditary senate has been too much neglected. There can scarcely be a question, however, that, by means of the influence of the aristocracy in returning the members of the Lower House, and in consequence of the great number of untitled territorial lords, among whom seats in the Commons are almost an inheritance, the Government is always chiefly formed of hereditary legislators. On referring to the names of those who have composed the administrations, from the Revolution downwards, we shall find them to consist, with little or no exception, of members of the Upper House, or of those who are

born to succeed to that order, or of those who aspire to it as the great reward of their political career, and are generally so rewarded for their services. The conduct of the aristocracy, therefore, towards Science, is that which rules its destinies in England and establishes its condition in society. It is not surprising that a feeling, derived from feudal times, of the all-sufficiency of rank and wealth, should be found in the polished descendants of the nobles of those times, as well as among those who, although unable to trace their origin so high, have by the worldly success of themselves or their progenitors become associates of the former in privilege and power. Neglect of science, and an indisposition to aid in its advancement and diffusion, are a necessary consequence of such a feeling; and it may be truly said, therefore, that there is an antagonism between hereditary legislation and science, and that the degradation of the latter in England is constitutional. In these remarks there is no intention to deny the influence of race: all nature proves it. *Fortes creantur fortibus et bonis*; and we may readily admit that a body, the greater part of whom are descended from persons gifted with great qualities, who are themselves exempt, by their fortunate position, from a necessity of attending to objects which occupy the time of ordinary men to the exclusion of sublimer pursuits, and who cultivate politics as a profession from an early age, may be better adapted to the higher offices of the State

than any equal number of their fellow-subjects. Nor can it be denied that such an order of men has been, and is, eminently useful in preserving England from the extreme evils of despotism and democracy. But there is an equal certainty that, as a class, it cannot but be peculiarly liable to a selfish abuse of its power and privileges, and that in fact it has often made large encroachments, both upon the monarchical and the popular branches of the constitution.¹ That such an order should not have an inclination to postpone the public advantage to the preservation and extension of its own powers, would be inconsistent with the ordinary tendencies of humanity; and hence arises a constant indisposition to promote the mental improvement and moral condition of the inferior classes, and a difference, moral, intellectual, and even phy-

¹ Of the latter, the greatest is the interference of peers in elections for the Lower House, which has become practically a part of the constitution; so, at least, a foreigner must have supposed, on reading the account of a public meeting which took place not long ago in a northern county, when a noble lord publicly declared his determination to spend a hundred thousand pounds, if necessary, in returning his son for the county, as soon as the latter should be of age. To increase the qualification of age from twenty-one to twenty-five years, would contribute in some degree to remedy this evil, as it would scarcely affect the interests of any but peers, and perhaps a few quasi-hereditary legislators of the Commons, while it would relieve the nation from the ridicule of such juvenile senators as are often seen, and would assist in saving the Lower House from the occasional disgrace of scenes, neither suited to the gravity of the assembly nor tending to conciliate public respect for it.

sical, between the highest and lowest classes of this country, greater than is found in any other.

Nor has the debasement of the lower classes been much relieved by the more enlightened influence of the Church, which, in truth, is no more than an inferior branch of the aristocracy. It is an observation of M. Guizot, that the Church of England has always ranged itself on the side of despotism and against the liberty of writing and speaking; and that, even in its reformed state, it has been “aussi abusive que l’ait jamais été l’Eglise Romaine.”¹ The same philosophic writer, while giving credit to the feudal lords of Germany, France, and England, for having by means of their wealth and leisure, and the security afforded by their castles, been the first to become sensible of the benefits of literature, and to make a movement in intellectual advancement, remarks that the inferior orders under their protection and control remained in a state of darkness, which the clergy afforded little aid in dispelling.

The modern noble still collects an intellectual society within his walls, cultivates the arts and sciences for his own gratification, as far as his own taste and knowledge prompt, and often much further from motives of vanity or emulation; but his collec-

¹ Guizot, Hist. Gén. de la Civilisation en Europe. Brussels. 12mo. 1844. P. 206.

tions are for the enjoyment of himself, his family, and friends : by others, they cannot even be seen but in the most transitory manner ; and thus these important materials of civilisation are useless to all but a few, and serve to perpetuate the moral and intellectual difference between the upper and lower orders of society. Until the opening of the British Museum to a select portion of the public, in 1759, Science cannot be said to have had any resources for its promotion beyond the patronage of a few of the most enlightened of the nobility, and the institutions which were originally established for the education of the clergy ; in a word, beyond the walls of the castle and the monastery. Of late years, the evil consequences of this seclusion of the ruling class, which is perhaps an inevitable consequence of wealth, populousness, rights of property, and customs of primogeniture in England, have been in some measure lessened by associations in aid of Science among the middle classes, which the Government cannot discountenance, because, although generally resisting improvement, it cannot finally avoid to adopt that which is strongly supported by public opinion. But as in the practice of the British constitution *genus* and *virtus* are synonymous, as rank and political power stand in lieu of every other qualification, it depends ultimately upon the hereditary legislators to determine, in almost every case, the manner in which the power and public resources and science of the

nation are to be directed for popular instruction and the advancement of the arts. The slow progress of the Royal Society during the first century of its establishment, shews plainly the little favour it met with from the governing powers. Of late years, great additions have been made to its treasures, and an inspection of them has been granted to the public, which cannot but have the effect of stimulating a few among the immense numbers who resort thither, as to a spectacle, to inquire into the meaning of the things which they see in that great magazine. But, uneducated as the multitude is, and having no superfluity either of time or means to bestow upon mental instruction, it is impossible that any great benefit can accrue to them, in their state of ignorance, from a free admission to the national collections. A previous education is not less necessary to enable the generality to derive benefit from that source, than it is to the ten-pound householder, that he may make a proper use of his political privilege.

In the administration of the British Museum, Science, as usual, is degraded; and especial care is taken that this great repository shall not promote the progress of knowledge more rapidly than is consistent with that system of education which is dispensed to the people by the ecclesiastical authorities. The Head of the Church presides over its management, and no appointment can be made in it with-

out his approbation. The official and family trustees, in number thirty, having been found almost useless in the management—the official, in consequence of their other occupations; the family trustees, as holding their offices chiefly for form's sake—it was felt necessary to associate others, and an addition was made of seventeen, elected nominally by the whole body, but in reality by the Government and the Head of the Church. It might be supposed that men of scientific attainments would generally have been preferred for this purpose; on the contrary, the title of “Trustee of the British Museum,” forming an agreeable addition to other signs of nobility, has generally been granted to some friend of the Government, desirous of being considered a patron of art and science; and thus, “while political offices have been bestowed elsewhere upon men of science, literary distinctions in England have been conferred for political purposes.”¹ With such a council for conducting the affairs of the British Museum, it is not very surprising that opportunities have been lost, never to recur, of enriching the Museum with objects most desirable for the advancement of art and literature; or that Munich, Berlin, and Paris, are in possession of collections which might, for a trifling expense, have been procured for England: while the resources disposable for such purposes have been

¹ Millingen, p. 25.

bestowed upon pictures at enormous prices, which are preferred because painting is the art which most easily makes impression on the vulgar sense; because pictures are the favourite furniture of palaces, and painting, consequently, better known than any other branch of art to the aristocracy; and because the seclusion of their own collections is less exposed to animadversion when there is a national collection of pictures open to the public.

The inconvenience of leaving the management of the scientific collections of the nation in the hands of men selected only for their rank and political influence, excited at length so much attention, that it became necessary for them, when vacancies occurred, to obtain the assistance of two or three men of science. If these are honoured as individuals by their association with rank, there is still a degradation of science in the very small minority which they constitute; and a yet greater degradation in the low salaries of the officers of the Museum, compared with those of persons employed in the departments of Government, to whom the most vulgar attainments are sufficient; while from the former, no small proficiency in the several branches of science to which the Museum is subservient is required, and is the more necessary on account of the want of it among the trustees. The public attention, however, which has been bestowed of late on the British Museum, gives the best reason

to hope that improvements and reforms will in process of time render it a great instrument in the process of national instruction. The management which so long rendered it almost useless in that respect, will then be forgotten. Not so the effect of aristocratical influence upon public monuments. These record the national character of the time of their erection, for centuries ; and thus the Gothic Houses of Parliament will be a lasting monument of the fond attachment of the rulers of England to the recollections of feudal times, and of their aversion to scientific improvement in the middle of the nineteenth century.

We may admit, perhaps, that the sources of pure Greek architecture which were opened during the last century, have not produced in every instance a judicious application of it by English architects ; but this is not surprising, as the extant monuments of ancient Greece have not yet been sufficiently examined, nor that profound knowledge of geometry sufficiently understood and appreciated, to which the Greeks were led by their architecture, and which in return brought that architecture to its unrivalled perfection. There is, moreover, something unfavourable to Greek architecture in that venality of art which is a consequence of the degradation of all science in England — which obliges the artist to look only to his pecuniary remuneration, and tempts the architect who is re-

warded in proportion to the amount of expenditure, to prefer the ostentatious and extravagant to those best characteristics of Greek architecture; the elegant and simple. But when we consider that the Romans, when they had conquered Greece, speedily abandoned their old Etruscan models, and thenceforward were ambitious only to imitate the *exemplaria Græca* both in literature and art, we must allow that it required a strong effort of prejudice and bad taste to reject Greek architecture even from competition with the Gothic, when it became necessary to rebuild the Houses of Parliament. The Gothic originated in modifications of corrupted Byzantine and Italian forms of Greek architecture; to which, when altitude had been given by the pointed arch, and magnitude by the wealth of the Church, successive experiments in times of advancing civilisation produced the best examples of this kind of architecture. Constructions arose typical of the power, riches, and barbaric splendour of the Roman Church, and well adapted to its pompous and awe-inspiring worship; but it is an architecture little suited, except in its most simple modes, to a reformed church, and still less to buildings intended for purposes wholly civil.

In Gothic temples a superstitious adherence to the cruciform plan was alone sufficient to prevent external beauty. In collegiate buildings, the necessity of mixing lofty churches with humble dwellings

was another obstacle to symmetry, and not less so the necessity in a lawless age of providing a *specula* and place of security, which, in the Latin church, became a belfry, when the subjection of the Greek empire to the Mahometans rendered that clamorous mode of summoning to prayers a distinction to the Latins. From these causes a shapeless ichnography as well as elevation became no less a principle of Gothic construction than symmetry is of the Greek ; and it was naturally accompanied by a neglect of all harmony in the members, by a disproportion of parts to the whole, an excessive employment of the arch ; and in the accessories, a profusion of unmeaning ornaments, forming a gorgeous covering to the incongruous masses, like a splendid coat on an ugly body. Undoubtedly, in the Gothic, as in the architecture of every half-civilised people, an agreeable effect may be produced in particular parts by an orderly and tasteful arrangement of details, however individually inelegant they may be ; but it can only be attained by means of great labour and expense, and has little effect in subduing a want of beauty in the general design.

This irregularity, inherent in Gothic architecture, is alone sufficient to render it inapplicable to large buildings for civil purposes, as it is adverse to the attainment of convenience, which, with a moderate degree of ornament, ought alone to be kept in view by a conscientious architect, or required by enlightened

employers. *Diis aliter visum.* Those, upon whom the decision of this great national question rested, determined upon building a great palace in the florid Gothic style, an experiment never before attempted, and for that reason alone objectionable.

An excuse was found in an imaginary consistency derived from the Gothic origin of Parliament, and the proximity of two great Gothic buildings to the intended site of the new palace. In order to break the symmetry, which could not be avoided without entirely abandoning interior convenience for the sake of external irregularity, it was necessary to erect an enormous tower, costly, out of all proportion to its utility, and which would not have been required had ordinary Greek architecture been employed. A result still more expensive cannot but attend the tasteless and unmeaning repetition of niches, statues, canopies, tracery, mouldings, and inscriptions innumerable, with which the inside of the building must be decorated as well as the exterior, and for which it is necessary to seek for models and precedents in all the most elaborate and extravagant examples of Gothic architecture. Such works, when accomplished at an enormous expense, can never deserve a higher praise than that of prettiness, and are utterly at variance with the character required for a palace of Parliament. Splendour and elegance may be suitable to the abode

of the sovereign : gravity and simplicity ought to distinguish the palace of legislation.

When a national calamity had destroyed all the public buildings of Athens, the necessity of applying a large portion of the national resources to their restoration was an opportunity not to be lost by a Pericles for promoting every branch of the arts which contribute to the uses of religion or civilised society ; and in a few years those arts reached a state of perfection, which they maintained, with little deterioration, for five centuries. In England a similar opportunity has produced a directly opposite effect ; and, instead of serving to the improvement of architecture and its attendant arts, has been employed in perpetuating those of a barbarous age. Throughout the progress of such works the caprices of ignorance must be studied, instead of truth and nature. A school of sculpture is to be created or encouraged, of which deformity is the principle, in which the artist is forbidden from deviating into nature, still less of raising it, as among the Greeks, to an ideal perfection. We become slaves to religious prejudice and adverse to improvement, in a greater degree even than the ancient Egyptians, who, while bound by the Hierarchy to adhere to the forms of their unskilful ancestors in the representation of priests, or kings, or gods, admitted of a correct imitation of nature in the figuring of

animal or vegetable life, which is forbidden in the Gothic.

Cherishing the recollection of the times in which their own power and privileges originated—those pattern times of *chivalry* and *religion*, when bigotry and superstition, rudeness of manners, debased morals, and the oppression of the weak by the strong, were the prevailing features of society—the arbiters of taste, and dispensers of the national resources in England, have resolved that, as far as depends on them, the national architecture shall be the Gothic, thereby degrading Science and retarding its progress.¹

To some, perhaps, these remarks will appear useless after the unanswerable arguments which were advanced in favour of Greek architecture for the Houses of Parliament before the work was begun, and factious now that it is nearly completed.² But they are necessary, as shewing how feeble is the voice of Science in opposition to the prejudices or mistaken interests of Power.

¹ It might well be said by Dr. Arnold, that he could write a whole chapter on the complaint of Harrington made two centuries ago, that “we are still living in the dregs of the Gothic Empire.” *Life and Correspondence of the Rev. Thomas Arnold, D. D.*, by A. P. Stanley, 8vo. London, 1844, i. p. 366.

² Three Letters from W. R. Hamilton, Esq., to the Earl of Elgin, on the New Houses of Parliament, 8vo. London, 1836.

The Gothic Palace, although the greatest, is far from being the only, monument which reflects discredit on the national taste and intelligence, and proves the degradation of science. Nor can it well be otherwise, when the ultimate decision on the mode and form in which art or science are to be applied to the great uses of the public, depends not upon the opinions of men of art or science, but upon those who hold certain official situations, and who, by their previous and habitual occupations, are among the least fitted for the duty of deciding. Sometimes it rests with those who direct associations, religious or commercial, or self-formed for generous and laudable purposes, and who are often injudicious through ignorance, or swayed by the interested counsels of others ; but in the great majority of instances, and with scarcely any exception in the most important, high official power is ultimately the arbiter. Not unfrequently the minister, with whom the question rests, would willingly relinquish the function of deciding, but cannot—however conscious he may be of his deficiencies in that kind of knowledge and experience which is necessary even to the forming of a right judgment as to the most eligible of the plans which may be submitted to him. More frequently, however, the acquisition of political power inspires the possessor with a sufficient confidence in his own superior judgment upon all subjects. On the most favourable supposition as to ministerial taste and scientific attainments, the limited tenure

of office, financial considerations, and other obstacles of various kinds, may occur to frustrate any attempts, however rational, to relieve the greatest and most commodious of European capitals from the reproach of being the most destitute of beauty and the most deficient in grandeur. No wonder that "the finest locality in Europe" has been spoiled as a *piazza*, when even its shape has depended on chance; when one side is erected by speculative builders, another at different times by two societies independently of each other; and when the edifice which occupies the upper side has been injured by the negligence or incapacity of official arbiters, who diminished its proportions, and, for the sake of exhibiting a favourite portico, threw it out of its intended position, by which a great deformity of that portico became so much more conspicuous, namely, that of a heavy and lofty spire planted upon a Greek pediment—an architectural absurdity created by ecclesiastical prejudices, and which has become so common as to have given no small dislike to Greek architecture, as applicable to sacred buildings. Other instances will readily occur to the reader in which similar causes have produced corresponding effects; but where riches are the measure of τὸ καλόν, and disinterested science deprived of all influence, it is not surprising that undertakings, whether for civil, military, religious, or merely social purposes, should be generally accomplished at an enormous expense with the smallest felicity of result.

That the social degradation of science has retarded its progress, and has placed Great Britain on a scientific level below that to which the advantages of its constitution, insular position, and wealth entitle it, can scarcely admit of a question. Unprotected and discouraged by the State, science can only exist by the favour of a superficially educated public, employed in the acquisition or dissipation of wealth, esteeming science only as it conduces to luxury, and measuring the value of every thing by money. In England, science, including literature, has but two sources of patronage—the Church and the Shop. Neither mathematical nor philological science ; neither the chemist, the geologist, the geographer, nor the proficient in any other branch of knowledge, can have any confidence in his means of maintaining the position in society to which a consciousness of superiority gives him a right to aspire, unless it happen also that he has felt the *sacred calling*. In that case his talents and acquirements may obtain an ultimate reward of honourable distinction and solid emolument. But beyond the pale of the Church there is no encouragement for science or for scientific literature, on the ground of their own merits ; for as to the profitable employments derived from some of the applied sciences, these are entirely of a commercial nature, and are to be classed with the productions which are rewarded by the shop.

Like any other kind of manufacture, that of books

depends upon the demand of the consumers. The dealer in mental productions, like any other merchant, directs the power of his capital to the manufacture of such works as give him the highest interest and the quickest returns of his money. He can with advantage support the periodical press, and reward, more or less liberally, according to his prospective estimate of the public taste, the writers of novels and romances of every kind, however unnatural and improbable in their story, if humorous and exciting ; or of tales invented to support opinions ;¹ or of memoirs, adventures, and biographies ; or of travels by ladies, or any kind of travels written with elegance, in which truth itself is made to look like romance, and from which science is carefully excluded ; or of compilations and revivals in alluring forms ; or of any other works adapted to the taste of those who look only to amusement in reading, or which may serve as a relaxation to those whose mental exercise in their professions would be tedious and disgusting, if it were not profitable. Indolence of mind, defective education, and the force of example, add immensely to readers of this description, and naturally include among them the great majority of the female portion of the reading public. As nothing creates an increased demand

¹ “ A fiction contrived to support an opinion is a vicious composition ; even a fiction contrived to enforce a maxim of conduct is not of the highest class.” — MACKINTOSH'S *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. ii, p. 495.

for production more rapidly than successful literature, no means are omitted, and scarcely any device considered dishonest, which a venal press can supply to the vendors of such works, for promoting their success, and for exciting public curiosity concerning them. The natural consequence of such an encouraging market as these commodities possess, is, that a large portion of the genius, wit, and eloquence of the nation is engaged in the labour of producing them, and that requiring little outlay beyond the recompense of the labourer, they possess so great a preference in the market over works requiring time and expense, that the latter are depressed almost to extinction. Philosophy, history, and scientific literature are under the necessity of insinuating their lessons under the garb of fiction (for with us the maxim seems to be, “Rien n'est beau que le faux, le faux seul est aimable”),¹ or in periodical publications, amidst productions of the lightest kind, or such as are adapted to the public taste by partizanship, literary or political, or by unfair criticism guided by personal feelings, but rendered grateful to the reader by wit, sarcasm, and ingenious misrepresentation. It is even in such company, or not much better, that for a course of years we have been accustomed to welcome those important essays, which have been the

¹ “Rien n'est beau que le vrai, le vrai seul est aimable.”

BOILEAU: *Ess.* ix. v. 43.

harbingers, and in great measure the moving causes, of some of the great improvements of the present age, both moral and political.

So vast is the disproportion between the consumption of works of amusement and those of instruction, and so much more easily and speedily are the former manufactured, that the publishing merchant can affix a price upon the former treble or quadruple that of the sum which it has cost to produce them, including a liberal allowance for the author's labour; while the latter are unwillingly undertaken by him, and chiefly for the sake of avoiding the reproach of being unfriendly to literature of the higher order. But he can seldom afford to purchase the author's right in them, or allow him any remuneration for his labour, except such as depends upon a slow and uncertain sale. The greater the outlay of time, mental labour, or other expenditure on a work of instruction, the smaller in general are the author's hopes of a recompense. If he attempt to publish by means of his own resources, he can at the utmost venture to print copies by hundreds, while works of amusement are printed by thousands; he is subject to a high agency to the retailer who sells for him, as well as to the tax (in the instance of expensive works, the heavy tax) which the law has most unjustly and barbarously imposed upon him for the benefit of certain libraries. He can seldom or never hope for more than a return of his expenses, after

a long delay, without any interest upon it, or any recompense for his time and labour. Under such circumstances, it is evident that scientific and instructive literature requires some kind of protection and encouragement from the State, very different from that of treaties with foreign states for the maintenance of copyright, which, by increasing the profits of the authors of popular works, tend to the deeper depression of those of an opposite description.

Science, however, cannot be arrested, although it may be retarded, in its progress. Like other kinds of enterprise, it has resorted to association for the furtherance of its object, and for the support of its expenses to the contributions of the associates. The earlier societies having been found inadequate to keep pace with the requirements of advancing science, new societies have been set on foot for the promotion of its subdivisions. But as, according to the well-known adage of Cicero, there is a common connexion among all the humanising arts,¹ it generally happens that a member of any one society finds it necessary to belong to two or three others: and as this voluntary taxation, in addition to that which is compulsory, cannot but have its limits, while the bounds of science are per-

¹ "Omnes artes, quæ ad humanitatem pertinent, habent quoddam commune vinculum, et quasi cognatione quâdam inter se continentur."—CICERO, *De Republicâ*, ii. 4.

petually enlarging, there is a tendency in all these societies to become insufficient for their purposes. Those, of which the objects are attained at the greatest expense, are the first to experience difficulties of this kind. The Geographical Society may be mentioned as an example, although better supported by numbers than almost any other. No science has been more in need of encouragement, because although there is none more universally useful, and although geography forms habitually a part of the education of both sexes, there is no branch of knowledge less diffused, or in which ignorance is more common, among the vulgar of all classes. Geography has been so much the more in want of assistance beyond that afforded by the market, as it is hardly considered to belong specifically either to science or to literature; and for this reason, while partaking of the oppression to which all the graver kinds of literature are subject, it has been excluded from that little protection which the Royal Society has afforded to other branches of science. But the chief impediment to the advance of geography is the great intelligence, labour, and expense which are required in collecting its materials. The vender of maps would be unable to carry on his trade were he not to obtain the materials of his compilations from all quarters at little cost, and to appropriate to his own use the unbought labours of others, in which he is aided by the absence of any sufficient law for the protection of original geo-

graphical property. No better proof can be given of the tardy progress of this science in England, and at the same time of its expensiveness, than the fact that little more than fifty years have elapsed since the Government was first roused to the necessity of causing England to be surveyed, and that after the expenditure of a million and a half, there is still no complete and authentic map of the British Islands. Not until lately has hydrography been attended to in a manner adapted to the vital interests which are attached to every thing connected with the maritime ascendancy of England. By the influence of one or two enlightened subordinates, some important steps have been made in hydrographical discovery ; but it is a sorry encouragement to the talents which may be employed in this department of the public service, to find that such scientific conquests as a true delineation of the northern coast of Africa and other parts of the Mediterranean, equally useful to modern navigation and to polite literature ; or that the various surveys which have been carried on in other parts of the globe, and have produced results which have benefited and enlightened all nations, are better known and appreciated abroad than in England ; that here such sources are still placed on a low degree of the scale of merit, serving to shew that in the Navy, as in the Army, Science is degraded.

Where literature is in such a condition as has

been described, the arts of design cannot be in the most desirable state. Among the ancients, artists were the teachers of the people, and their works stood in the place of lectures on religion, morality, and history. Since the press has diffused its influence over all nations and classes, the arts of design are no longer so important as a part of public instruction, though still lending an useful aid to civilisation, enlarging the sphere of intellectual enjoyment among the people, raising their moral character, and thus assisting in the maintenance of order. Good taste is nothing more than an emanation of knowledge, and can seldom be found but in minds which have been well educated and cultivated ; it is, in fact, nothing more than the feeling in which all such minds are agreed, and the result of a common discipline. There may be truth in the saying that the artist, like the poet, is born, not made ; and sometimes great works are produced by untutored genius ; but in general the maxim of Horace will apply to every art :—

“ ego nec studium sine divite venâ,
Nec rude quid prosit video ingenium.”¹

Few artists can rise to the standard of a refined taste, without a better cultivation of the mind than can often fall to the lot of natural talents in this country of expensive education. Even with the

¹ De Arte Poeticâ, v. 409.

most happy union of genius and cultivation, he will not be saved from the necessity of complying with the taste of an ill-educated public ; because, in the absence of all other protection, the favour alone of that public can enable him to gain a livelihood by his profession. If a painter rise above the vulgar taste, his works will often remain unsold. An enlightened patron may occasionally secure to him a reward for the completion of some more elevated purpose ; but such rare exceptions to the generality of purchasers will hardly, in the utmost conceivable aggregate, maintain the artist in his proper position in society, unless he devote also a large portion of his time to works adapted to the general market, such as portraits, scenes taken from the fashionable drama or romance,—works, in short, which, instead of aiming at a permanent reputation, recommend themselves merely as an elegant kind of furniture for the houses of those whose principal occupations are to accumulate wealth, and to employ its superfluities in a rivalry of ostentation.

The worldly condition of Sculpture is still worse than that of Painting, sculpture requiring a more educated mind, a more perfect conception of the beautiful, and a greater stretch of intellect in embodying that conception. The learned and skilful sculptor is therefore more rarely found : he meets with a smaller number of congenial minds to appreciate his efforts ; and among the lower classes

scarcely any that can understand them. And yet he has some advantages over the painter. While the latter, in his more perishable productions, derives little or no assistance from the ancients, the sculptor has the opportunity of studying some of those ancient specimens of the plastic art which seem to us like the productions of a different species of mortals. In high patronage, also, the sculptor has an advantage, in the public demand which continually occurs for memorials of great events or of distinguished individuals,—works which cannot easily be confined to Gothic sculpture. Nevertheless, the advances made in sculpture have not been such as the establishment of a rich museum of ancient works in the metropolis gave some reason to hope for, either in that first step to improvement, an imitation of ancient art, or in the application of the taste and skill so acquired to modern purposes: the demand for public monuments has not produced sufficient capacity to execute them, and the profession of a sculptor, like that of a painter, is chiefly supported by the manufacture of portraits,—a very pleasing branch of art, but created to gratify feelings of vanity or affection, totally unconnected with cultivation of mind, and indicating, by the immense preference given to it, the low intellectual tone of the present age, as well as that something more than commercial protection is required for improvement in the arts of design, not less than in science and literature.

Where Science is degraded, there cannot be a good system of education. The promotion of science and of secular instruction are identical, or are parts at least of the same process of civilisation. The defects of English education have been so generally acknowledged and demonstrated by eminent writers, including some of the clergy, who claim the right of conducting it, that it would be superfluous to enter into any proofs of the fact. Deriving no aid from the State, education is in England more expensive to individuals than in countries where it is partly supported by the public, and from this cause alone is comparatively less diffused. Like other commodities, it is almost entirely venal, and a source of emolument to the teachers; and as the greater foundations in aid of education, made at various times by princes and others, were chiefly intended for the education of the clergy in times when learning was scarcely required in any other condition of life, teachers of every branch of knowledge have generally been of the clerical profession, and secular education a monopoly of the Church: by a consequence derived from the same times, it is directed in a manner more conducive to the dignity, influence, and profit of the teachers, than to the benefit of the instructed. The matter learnt is miserably small in proportion to the time and money required in obtaining it; and parents, who under a better system could afford to give their children an education, comprehending the higher branches of lite-

rature, are under the necessity of confining it to that which is strictly necessary to their destined pursuits in life. Hence, in all mixed societies, a sad minority of those who possess even the most ordinary fruits of a liberal education; hence the general favour accorded to superficial accomplishments, while attainments of a higher order are regarded with envy or aversion, or with contempt, as contributing nothing to worldly success. In England, the expensiveness of a literary education not only confines the numbers enjoying its benefits to a much more wealthy class than on the continent of Europe, but the greater abuses and errors in teaching lead to a more ineffectual result. Of a hundred men who have passed ten years in learning Latin and Greek, how many are there who can write, how many are there who can read, a page of either language with facility?

The mode of teaching the ancient languages in England seems to have been designed, not with the intention of diffusing the knowledge of antiquity as the best foundation of literary taste and judgment, or with a view to its application to ulterior acquirements,¹ or for the sake of the advan-

¹ The pronunciation of the Latin vowels, as taught in the schools of England, is alone sufficient to prevent us from deriving as much advantage from the study of that language as the people of the Continent.

tages derivable from it in every path of science and literature, but rather with that of confining it within narrow bounds among the generality, while a few superior scholars are formed for the service and benefit of the Church, and for the maintenance of its superiority in learning.

The student of ancient literature, instead of proceeding in the manner in which languages are most readily learnt, and before he has become familiar with the idiom of the most civilised times of Athens and Rome, is tormented with the vanities of verse-making, the mysteries of metres, and the reading of poets, whose language was antiquated, and already a subject of curiosity and criticism, in those times. Hence often supervenes a feeling of despair or disgust, which is never overcome. Even of those who can conquer such feelings, the far greater number consume their years of study without having attained any such combined knowledge of the history, geography, philosophy, or arts of those enlightened nations, without which there can be no proper understanding of that great fabric of taste and knowledge which endured so many centuries,¹

¹ "Dans la Grèce," remarks M. Guizot, "la simplicité du principe social a amené un développement prodigieusement rapide: jamais aucun peuple ne s'est déployé en aussi peu de temps avec autant d'éclat. Mais après cet admirable élan, tout-à-coup la Grèce a paru épuisée: sa décadence, si elle n'a pas été aussi rapide que son progrès, n'en a pas moins été étrange-

from the ruins of which Europe has derived her civilisation,¹ and which, if held in greater estimation by the higher classes, would have the effect of improving intelligence, taste, and morals in every grade of society.

Without a knowledge of the ancient languages, neither our own nor any of the modern languages of Europe can be properly understood, for however desirable it may be to preserve the "pure well of English undefiled," the advances of science since that fountain arose have created a constant necessity of resorting to the more perfect and more civilised languages of antiquity for the ordinary purposes of speech. By the same aid the most useful of the modern languages are half acquired, and with little further effort the means are thereby afforded to us of obtaining a knowledge of the physical, moral, and

ment prompte."—*Hist. Gén. de la Civilisation en Europe*. Bruxelles, 1844, p. 32.

The reverse of all this would be nearer the truth; but the error is not uncommon among those whose attention has been chiefly directed to mediæval or modern history. They mistake the history of Athens, in the height of its glory, for the history of Greece, of which, unfortunately, little remains but in her extant monuments. But as there are no proofs of civilisation so strong as those derived from literature and the fine arts, Greek poetry, and a collection of Greek coins, are alone sufficient to shew that civilisation in Greece advanced by slow degrees; that it extended over 1500 communities, and lasted as many years.

¹ "All intellectual civilisation comes from Greece."—*Life &c. of Dr. Thomas Arnold*, vol. i. p. 371.

political state of foreign nations, of making an estimate of our own relative character and condition, and of abating that pride of ignorance which is the greatest of all obstacles to improvement. Even among the higher classes, the modern languages of Europe, though generally taught, are seldom learnt, except by those who pass some years of their lives abroad. As we descend in society, that knowledge is naturally still less diffused. Even in that numerous and most influential class who supply the public with their habitual reading, the superficial knowledge of every language except English is continually apparent in translations, travels, novels, and generally in the lighter works of every kind, which support, and in great measure create, that class.

But it is not in one branch of education, or in one profession alone, that the defects of English education, as compared with the advanced state of the arts subservient to the comforts and luxuries of life, are conspicuous. In almost every employment of the middle ranks there is an insufficiency of the fruits of education, even for the proper management of the employment itself. In the great agricultural class, forming more than a third of the population, this is particularly observable,¹ and the more so as some advances have been made towards a better

¹ On this subject, see particularly the remarks of Viscount Torrington, in his work on the "State of Agriculture in the County of Kent." 8vo. 1846.

education in towns. Of the generally illiterate state of the community, considering its unparalleled wealth, there can be no better proof than the great scarcity of public libraries, and of booksellers, such as are found in almost every large town of the Continent of Europe. The trade can hardly be supported unless it be combined with some other of more vulgar utility; and it scarcely ever aspires higher than to a sale of ephemeral publications, or of books patronised by the clergy for religious instruction, but to which a circulating library, consisting chiefly of novels, is an indispensable auxiliary. No higher order of booksellers is to be found, except in the principal cities of Great Britain; in Ireland, with difficulty even in such cities.

As there are no rewards of learning but in the Church, it is natural that proficiency in classical acquirements should chiefly be confined to that profession. Even in the Church, however, as a knowledge of the easy and degenerate Greek in which the New Testament is written is sufficient for that most numerous and useful class, the parochial clergy, we can hardly expect that much more is in general retained after ordination, if it has ever been acquired; or that the most distinguished scholars of the Continent have many rivals in England. The emoluments of the higher offices of the Church are too great for the excitement of industry, while the duties annexed to them, whether

of education or of ecclesiastical discipline, or those of general politics, which the British Constitution has imposed upon the highest rank of the clergy, are too continuous and manifold to admit of the leisure which the pursuits of learning require.

The late Dr. Arnold, who was a noble example of diligence and enlightened perseverance in the conduct of education, proved also how difficult it is to direct the present system to a beneficial result. "If half the energy and resources," he observes, "which have been bestowed upon Bible Societies and Missions had been turned to the reform of our own institutions, I cannot but think it would have produced more satisfactory fruit." A layman may be permitted to suspect that the religious education of the Church of England might be improved, when he sees on one hand numerous examples of a relapse into Romanism, while others, following the bias caused by the encouragement which a large portion of the Church, contrary to its own interests, have given to Bible Societies, delight in an ignorant, or abusive, or injudicious application of Scripture, and recall to recollection the language of the Puritans, as well as their arrogant, unsocial, and uncharitable doctrines. One cannot but deem it not unlikely that to an irrational training we are chiefly to attribute the little success of missionaries, whose laudable efforts to plant the rudiments of civilisation and Christianity in distant countries, however useful in laying

foundations of the former, have almost totally failed in regard to the latter ; the failure being in great measure, if not entirely, to be attributed to the prominence given to mysteries, which can never be made intelligible to the barbarian mind, instead of placing in the first rank of their teaching the leading principles of morality and the divine doctrines of charity and forgiveness of injuries. The travels of missionaries abound with examples of the irrational and ineffectual zeal with which they pursue their attempts to “evangelise the heathen.”

It is in the essence of great privileged bodies to be inactive in the furtherance of popular improvement, as there always remains a latent feeling that a first change, even in such unimportant things as exteriors of religious worship, manifestly requiring some reform, may be followed by a succession of others inimical to the stability both of Church and Aristocracy ; and hence, perhaps, the opinion said to be entertained by some, that the Catechism is a sufficient education for the labourer—that every thing beyond does more harm than good—or that if a knowledge of letters is given to him, the Sacred Volume is sufficient for his reading. It is scarcely possible, however, to believe that such sentiments can be very prevalent among those enlightened classes. If for no other reason than its antiquity, the Bible stands more in need of explanation to the unlearned than any work in existence, and can only

be considered as the one book needful, upon the same principle as that of the Caliph Omar, when he burnt the Alexandrian library. The benefits of science are too manifest in the workshops and fields of the daily labourer not to be evident even to his untutored mind; and as education, even in its humblest form, is attended with some expense, legislative interference and public support are obviously necessary to meet that stream of ignorance, and its consequent vice, which is now entering the world with such alarming rapidity.

As the Established Church cannot have any well-founded apprehensions from the invasions of Dissent, while she holds her immense superiority over it in dignities, wealth, and learning, she would most effectually aid the progress of civilisation and morality, as well as best consult her own prosperity, by assisting the civil government in amending and enlarging the existing system of secular education among all classes, without distinction of church or sect, and unconnected as much as possible with religious teaching. There is no very apparent reason why the Church should be opposed to such a course. The human mind cannot receive instruction without imbibing a respect for the principles of morality, a proper sense of which is not only a necessary accompaniment to religious instruction, but must always precede it, however strenuously a contrary course may be attempted.

In providing teachers for primary schools, the Government can hardly avoid some interference with secondary education; for, supposing it possible to draw any distinct line of separation between the two, there is still an extreme difficulty in understanding how a system of primary education can produce any permanently beneficial effect on the minds and manners of the lower orders, if those immediately above them remain more uneducated than themselves, in proportion to their means of comfortable existence and exemption from bodily labour. Such a disturbance of the gradations of society, without which political order in a free country cannot exist, may even furnish an argument favourable to those who wish to deprive the lowest orders of all worldly instruction. No great alteration in the existing machinery, by which education is conveyed to the upper and middle classes may be practicable or desirable, but it is confessedly within the power of Parliament to render the numerous foundations for education already existing more useful than they are, and to devise some mode of inspection and control, by which the present tardy, expensive, and antiquated modes of teaching—effects of the venality of English education—may be corrected, and some remedy administered for this leading cause of the low state of literature and science in the great majority of all classes.

The evil consequences which have arisen in

France from the superintendence of education by the State are not to be apprehended in England. The disputes of Church and University in that country, and the supposed tendency of the latter to lead the nation into irreligion, are caused by the jealous and arbitrary character of the Roman Church, its opposition to all education which is not conducted by itself, and its wishes in favour of popular ignorance, as the surest mode of maintaining its own authority.

In England, where the Established Church cannot be suspected of entertaining any such sentiments, its superior learning would be essential in Educational Councils; while its influence would be a security that the principles of moral rectitude and justice, which are the most important fruits of a secular education, should not be unsupported by religion.

A hierarchy, by reason of the unvarying nature of religious truth, while progress characterises all worldly studies and pursuits, is from this cause alone unfit for the exclusive management of secular education, however necessary that may have been when no science was to be found but in the Church. On the other hand, their office of religious teachers, and the position which they have held in society from the time of the revival of letters as directors of education, forbid their exclusion from the superin-

tendence of any extensive scheme of secular education promoted by the State ; the first object, however, of such a measure being the intellectual improvement of the lower orders, without any reference to the faith and practice of any church or sect, it would manifestly be expedient that in primary schools, supported at the public expense, religious teaching should not advance beyond those principles in which all Christian churches and sects are agreed, but that further instruction should be left to the pastors of each particular flock. To reconcile sectarian differences by any act of Government is impossible ; to support the religious education of Dissent is, in some measure, a movement of the State against its own Established Church ; while to furnish the latter, in such an important matter as education, with facilities which are denied to Dissent is little removed from persecution. The effect of insisting too much upon *religious education* in schools supported by the public, would probably be to produce such a rivalry of zeal in favour of the doctrines of each diversity of faith and practice as would leave secular instruction comparatively neglected, and the result would be to send the labourer to his work, his memory charged with that which he may never be made to understand ; perfect, perhaps, in the words of his Catechism, and not unskilled in psalmody, but with very little of that kind of instruction of which he may truly be said to be most in need, since he is already provided with

religious teachers. Experience has shewn that even Roman Catholics and Protestants may be educated in the same school without offence to the religious feelings of the parents or pastors of the pupils, by a judicious separation of religious from secular teaching. In some parts of the United States of America, a country in which there is no want of religious differences, clergymen of the various denominations are agreed in excluding sectarian instruction and sectarian books from the public schools, unanimously requiring only that "the great axioms of Christian morality should be sedulously taught, and that the teachers should be examples of the virtues which they are required to inculcate."¹ Thus alone, in truth, can the asperities of religious discord be softened, conflicting modes of faith and practice be brought to a friendly approximation, many causes of dissension put an end to, and the civil government assisted in the general maintenance of order; its highest object, and that to which all minor considerations ought to yield. Nor is it likely that the great body of the laity, who are to be taxed for the support of a system of education instituted by the State, will ever be satisfied with any mode of teaching which shall have the effect of excluding any denomination of Christians from the schools supported by them, however unavoidable it may have been for the Government, in

¹ Edinburgh Review, vol. lxxiii. p. 486.

a partial and temporary measure, to yield to the influence which for the present has produced that effect.

One of the most important considerations connected with the degradation of Science in England is the contrast of its condition in France, that country in which, above all others, every change, every circumstance, social or political, has important effects in England, and an interest inferior only to that of our own internal affairs. If London be the commercial capital of the World, Paris stands in the higher position of the intellectual capital of Europe. This, indeed, is nothing more than she has been from a very early period of modern history. The light was derived from Paris which in Germany led to the Reformation; and although at Paris the power of the Roman clergy, supporting and supported by political despotism, continued to flourish for near three centuries later, the French clergy, during all that time, were undermining their own Church by the cultivation of learning, until, in the reign of Louis XIV. Literature, and soon afterwards Science, became independent of the Church, by the establishment of the Academies. Public libraries had existed in Paris for ages before there was any such thing in London. By the aid of the French Government during the two last centuries, hundreds of volumes have issued from the Parisian presses of the utmost value to the progress of learning and

science;¹ and magnificent establishments for public instruction have conferred honour upon France, while this essential branch of government has never been considered one of the duties of the Executive of England, though several of its kings, following their own inclination, have encouraged Science, thereby shewing that monarchy is more favourable than oligarchy to popular improvement.

In later times, the French Institute has been a powerful instrument in promoting intellectual improvement in Europe. It is a great Council of Science, supported by, and subservient to, the Executive Government, and may be said to form, after the Church, a fifth estate of the realm. Composed of the conductors of education, and of all the most eminent men in literature, science, and the arts, it confers dignity, encouragement, and protection upon them all. *Membre de l'Institut* is a title of nobility inferior only to that of *Pair de France*; and, where there are no hereditary legislators, not much inferior. For 150 years, under every change of government, the Institute has maintained its useful course and powerful influence in the instruction of the people; has made Paris the centre of European intelligence; by the cultivation of French literature has caused a language, which is naturally poor, and the most unharmonious, to be the most perfect in Europe, the

¹ See a list of the most important of these works in Millingen, p. 19.

most exact instrument for the transmission of Science, and the favourite medium of international communication—no slight advantage, derived by the French from their protection of Science, and which has contributed greatly to the power and influence of the nation and its government. Founded on the firm basis of Science, and directing its views entirely to the advancement of human knowledge, the Institute was enabled to resist the storms which carried away all the other parts of the social fabric in France, saved the nation from that entire demoralisation with which it was threatened by democratic licentiousness and military despotism, and served not unfrequently to mitigate the effects of a war which was leading Europe back into barbarism.¹ It is particularly in the cultivation of ancient literature, philology, archæology, historical criticism, and ancient art, that England is inferior to Germany as well as to France; that is to say, in those branches of knowledge which are parents of every thing except religion, that civilise and dignify mankind. The constitution of the upper French Chamber is another advantage which Science possesses in France. Consisting of members selected from the most accomplished persons, civil, military, or otherwise scientific, it is a body to which, from

¹ In 1806, when hostility between the two nations was at the extreme, the prize offered by Napoleon for the most important discovery in galvanism was awarded by the Institute to Davy.

the tried merits of the individuals, all classes lend a willing, and, it must be confessed, a more rational respect, than that which traditional prejudice pays to hereditary virtue. In this remark there is no intention of insinuating an opinion, that a body so constituted could be advantageously substituted in England for our own Upper House. Every settled government has grown out of its geography and history, and cannot, without extreme danger, be altered in any essential respect but by the slowest degrees.¹ France, presenting on all sides an extended land frontier towards powerful continental nations, must always depend principally for its safety and independence on its army, and must always require a strong central authority. The present sovereign, although placed on the throne by a republican movement, has of necessity been continually engaged in strengthening the authority of the crown, as well as the stability of his own family; and, threatened as he is by two extreme parties, he must continue to do so at all hazards. As a limited monarchy, founded on Science, and in which the unenlightened classes have little influence in returning the representative body, France has made a wonderful progress

¹ "A government is not, like a machine or building, the work of man; it is the work of nature, like the nobler productions of the vegetable and animal world, which man may improve and damage, and even destroy, but which he cannot create."—MACKINTOSH, *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. iii. p. 358.

in power since she lay in chains at the feet of her conquerors. In the course of a few years she again appears on a footing of equality with the most powerful nations. She has gained an important position near the entrance of the Mediterranean, and a territory capable of any degree of extension in Northern Africa ; she has obtained an influence in Spain, Greece, and Egypt, at least as powerful as that of England—meets her as a rival everywhere but in the British possessions—has made Paris the citadel, as well as the capital, of France, and already obliges us to think of fortifying our shores and harbours against the possible effect of her superiority of land-forces, when combined with an increased facility of conveying them by sea, which a new principle of navigation has afforded.

The defects of English education are still more to be lamented, inasmuch as England is the most colonising nation in Europe, and has been creating for the last two centuries new societies, after her own image, in various parts of the world, and at this moment is planting colonies at the antipodes, destined, apparently, to become powerful nations, and to complete a chain of Anglo-Saxon civilisation around the globe. This civilisation, founded on the advantages which we derive from our insularity, geographical position, and mineral wealth, and which has been developed by the security of property and the free institutions, equally derived from

the same physical sources, has been not a little deteriorated in quality and impeded in progress, by the antagonism to Science which is inherent in hereditary legislation. The result of these several causes is, that the national character which England transplants into her colonies is that of a people more industrious, more active and enterprising, than that of other nations, but not remarkable for intelligence, invention, or a desire of mental progress—despising, because ignorant of, the higher branches of polite education—regarding Science chiefly as it ministers to luxury and the acquisition of property, and making the last of these the great business of life.

When the redundance of population drove the Greeks to colonise, they were headed by some of the noblest of the mother-country. The most renowned in philosophy, arts, and arms, were at the head of the emigration; and, whether the colony became a tyranny or a republic, it was enabled at once to direct itself without the aid of the metropolis. Although the colonies of England are of a totally different nature from those of ancient Greece, being merely external possessions of the crown, governed by the metropolitan laws for the safety of person and property, and protected by its arms, the same increase of population and capital, the same progress of agriculture, navigation, commerce, and the arts, constitute the success of the

modern, as they constituted that of the ancient colony. But the nobility of intellect, skill, and taste, which accompanied the latter, rendered them speedily able to rival their ancestors in every branch of art and science, as well as in opulence. In the British colonies, there being neither a hereditary aristocracy, the example of which operates in some measure as a substitute for education in the mother-country, nor an aristocracy of science, because it has there no existence, there is no class which, either by privilege or mental superiority, can give support to the representatives of the crown, in obtaining from the colonist that self-denying sense of the advantages of order and discipline which is necessary to the due maintenance of a distant vice-royalty: those destined to constitute the upper class are men whose education has been entirely directed to knowledge useful in the pursuit of gain; who rely upon the augmentation of wealth as the one thing needful, and who, if they are successful, acquire a self-sufficiency impatient of control, bearing little affection or gratitude to the mother-country, and generally seeking for a struggle with the delegated authority of the Sovereign in the management of affairs. It is, perhaps, not less to a predisposition, caused by the neglect of education and the degradation of Science in England, than to the vices and impolicy of the metropolitan Government,¹ that the

¹ This again we may trace to *ἀπαιδευσία*, namely, to that of George III. and some of his ministers.

defection of the North American colonies is to be attributed. And the same radical causes have continued to operate upon American society in its independent state. There being no aristocracy of birth, and very little of science, and no greater favour being shewn to the latter than in England, a transplanting of the novelties of art, science, or literature, from the mother-country is sufficient, or nearly so, for the demands of a community in which no science is esteemed that does not immediately contribute to profitable enterprise and gainful speculation. Under these circumstances we need not, perhaps, be surprised that, while advancing civilisation in America has consisted in an imitation of English improvement, there has in other respects been an unfavourable divergence from the national character, and a distortion of some of its best features.

Asperity of manner, a contempt for all other modes of society, pride founded in ignorance, are perhaps no more than natural consequences of republican institutions separated from the rest of the civilised world. But, unhappily, we find, also, that an affectation of plain dealing is accompanied with a great insensibility to the essentials of truth and honesty, and that the Government, unable to control the national will, and defended by distance from the necessity of conforming to those principles of moderation and forbearance which European States are more or less bound to observe, pursues

towards its weaker neighbours a course of ambition, hypocrisy, aggression, and rapacity, which seems to have been imitated from some of the worst examples of the French Revolution. If all civilisation has a tendency to democracy, as we have been taught to believe,¹ the example of America seems to shew that there is a reaction in favour of barbarism when democratic institutions, unaided by good education, have an unbounded field for the increase of prosperity and population.

If, therefore, the state of Education, and the degree of encouragement given to Science in England affect the character, not only of the rising generation at home, but ultimately that of the Anglo-Saxon race in every part of the globe, it is a subject which demands a first place in the thoughts of every British subject of mature age, and has an especial claim on the anxious attention of the legislature.

It is hardly within the province, or the competency, of a mere F.R.S. to suggest modes by which a Minister or a Committee of Public Instruction might best be assisted in council, as well as in the execution of their important duties; but as those who criticise existing things are sure to create

¹ *La Démocratie en Amérique*, par A. De Tocqueville : Introduction.

disappointment in their readers unless they hazard some scheme of reform, the following suggestions, founded on the principle that Education cannot be well conducted where perfect protection is not given to Science, and their due rank in society to those who cultivate it, are thrown out for the consideration of those who will have to deliberate upon the great question, as to the best manner of promoting Education among the people of England. An Institution might be formed out of the present Royal and other principal societies, divided into four Academies, or classes, (subdivisible into sections) of Mathematics, Physics, Literature, and the Arts, each class to be headed by a council of a limited number of members, receiving salaries from the State, and who might be elected, as vacancies occurred, by the members of the council, or of the class, or of the united council, or of the general body, as might be found preferable. Many of these counsellors would have other sources of emolument derived from their employment in education or scientific establishments. To some of its members not so circumstanced the salary would give the means of pursuing an intellectual course, without that constant reference to the market which now prevails; to some, whose merits may have placed them in the situation of counsellors, although their labours had commercially been productive of little remuneration, the pension might be the means of

saving them from penury and despair in their latter years. There might also be unsalaried counsellors of rank and fortune, like the *académiciens libres* of the French Institute.¹

Such a great Council of Science might not only furnish aid to a minister or committee of public instruction, but would be at the command of every other department of the executive, when in want of the information which Science alone can supply: Nor when such councils were once, like the French Institute, in constant activity, would it be easy for any society or individual, in whom accident had placed the decision as to a public measure or a public monument, into which art or science entered as an essential part (and there is scarcely any into

¹ Sir Humphry Davy "flattered himself that he might be able to prevail with his Majesty's Government to afford to Science some substantial support, worthy of the cause and worthy of the country, which to the resources of Science had hitherto contributed so little and had owed so much." "It was his wish to have seen the Royal Society an efficient establishment for all the great purposes of Science, similar to the College contemplated by Lord Bacon, and sketched in his 'New Atlantis,' having subordinate to it the Royal Observatory at Greenwich for Astronomy, and the British Museum for Natural History, in its most extensive acceptance." But "the Government was lukewarm or indifferent in matters of science, and gave him no effectual support; applying to him without hesitation when requiring the aids of Science and of the Fellows of the Royal Society, and when their object was attained forgetting the services."—*Memoirs of the Life of Sir H. Davy, by Dr. John Davy*, vol. ii. pp. 127, 135.

which it does not enter), to carry any thing into execution in defiance of opinions which the public could not but regard with deference.

But although Science would be relieved from its present degradation, and greatly benefited by such an establishment, it would not be thereby raised to a level with the Service of the Executive Government: that can only be derived from the fountain of honour; and no mode of honouring Science seems more likely to be attended with advantage to the public, than the admission of a few eminent men of science to a seat in the House of Peers for life. A representative of the most ancient of the ennobled families of England would not be dishonoured by sitting on the same bench with a Newton, or a Cook, a Herschel, or a Davy. Why should theological science be exclusively admitted to association in the Upper House with politics and the law? why, of all the other sciences, should Theology alone be represented in that illustrious assembly? If the answer should be, That it is for the purpose of giving dignity to the sacred profession, and that it is no more than a just compensation to the Clergy for their exclusion from the House of Commons, we may be allowed to observe, that this very exclusion of the Clergy from the Commons has a tendency to degrade and discourage Science in general, since the Clergy, by their education, profession, leisure, and, still more, by their possession of almost all the

rewards, profitable or honourable, attached to science, cannot but possess a very large proportion of the scientific attainments of the nation. Nor is this the only cause which operates to exclude Science from the Lower House of Parliament. The reformed laws of election are far more favourable to the higher and lower, than to that middle class from which Science chiefly proceeds. In former times, Science might be introduced into Parliament by an enlightened patron. Now that the power of the peerage in influencing the return of members to the Lower House is chiefly confined to agricultural districts, it is naturally bestowed upon the peer's own family and connexions. In descending to the ten-pound householder, the privilege has been granted to a class who, by education or elevation of mind, are seldom fit for the exercise of it, most of whom value the privilege only as it may be turned to personal advantage, but who, at the same time, are so numerous, compared with those better qualified who enjoy the same privilege, that the influence of Ignorance may be said to have been increased by Reform, unattended as it has been by Education. Scientific men, moreover, whose vocation is the pursuit of truth, have generally too much honest pride to submit to the exercise of the arts which are required for success in elections, or, at least, to become skilful in them. Nor are they in general remarkable for the command of those sinews of election warfare, upon

which the success of a contest depends, not less frequently than in former times.

There is no kind of knowledge and experience more useful in the supreme administration of public affairs than that which is acquired by officers of the crown, civil and military, serving abroad. Mainly by this class of men in the course of the past century, has England, and, through England, Europe, been made acquainted with the countries beyond the limits of this quarter of the globe. It is manifestly, therefore, most desirable, that the information acquired by the individuals should be made as available as possible to the great councils of the nation, and in particular to the House of Peers, which, consisting of great landholders, lawyers, and ecclesiastics, is better stored with the science required for carrying on domestic government, than qualified for the consideration of affairs relating to the dependencies of Great Britain beyond the sea, or any other distant countries. Instead of facilities, however, for the entrance of unemployed officers into Parliament, the retired diplomatist is by his pension excluded even from the Lower House ; and among the naval and military servants of the crown who have completed a career of distinction, there are few who are not indisposed, from considerations of age or fortune, or health impaired in the service, to undergo the exertions required to enter Parliament and to perform its duties. To the House of

Lords there is no access for them, unless when the achievements of the individual have been of such renown, that, consistently with custom, it cannot be denied. And the number of these additions to the peerage is limited by the consideration, that as the dignity of the Lords requires the new family associated with them to be superior in wealth as well as in rank, the nation would be put to too great an expense were such creations frequently made ; hence often ensues a great comparative injustice in the difference of reward bestowed upon two men, who in reality may have equal claims to the national gratitude, the one remaining a commoner while the family of the other is not only ennobled as long as it endures, but receives the means of supporting the rank for some generations at the public expense. The custom is attended also with this great disadvantage to the nation, that the science and experience of the many, although not less applicable to the public benefit than those of the one, are lost in unprofitable retirement. Nor can there be a question, that the admission of some of the former to the House of Lords for life would have a better effect in stimulating the exertions of the whole body of public servants, than the occasional elevation of one to the hereditary peerage. In the army and navy such examples would be highly influential in aid of any measures which may be devised for the improvement of military education, and of a system of rewards and punishments.

By protecting Science, by rendering its condition more honourable, and more nearly equal to that of the privileged classes, instead of forcing it by degradation to an alliance with the democratic or anarchical influences of society, the Executive Government would acquire the most rational and powerful of all agents in the maintenance of order; and as Science is of no particular nation, but forms a confederacy consisting of the most permanently powerful class of every country, among whom rivalry tends only to advance knowledge and enlighten mankind, the encouragement of Science cannot but be one of the best preservatives against the evils of war.

If Science had been less neglected and degraded, many of the errors of Great Britain in her exterior relations, caused by a want of information in those who have had the direction of affairs, might have been avoided; as well as the financial inconveniences which generally follow such errors, and have so often operated as a cause or a pretext for pursuing a timid or imperfect course of policy, instead of that which would have been at once more honourable and more advantageous. If Science had been politically anything more than a name, the friends of improvement might not have been struggling so long with selfish or mistaken interests detrimental to the public benefit—might not at this late hour have been removing

inconveniences, destructive of the health or comforts of society—would probably have arrived much sooner at a conviction of the necessity of relieving the too rapidly increasing population of these islands from burdens upon their food, for the benefit of the higher classes; and although they could never have been secure from the calamities of famine, they might have foreseen the possibility of it under the given circumstances, and have taken wiser measures to mitigate, if not to avert, the infliction. Had Science possessed its due influence or authority during the past century, many great works essential to the safety or prosperity of the country would not at this time remain to be done; nor others of comparative inutility have been executed at an enormous expense, such as the Royal Canals of Scotland and Ireland, the Waterloo Bridge, and the Thames Tunnel. There would probably have been a better management of public works, a better system of naval architecture; and when steam was applied to communication by sea and land, the Councils of Science might have saved the community from much of the needless expenses, gambling and ruin, the mechanical errors and disregard of the public safety, which the rapid increase of disposable capital in England, and an insatiable thirst of high profits, have occasioned in the prosecution of this great social improvement. Nor is it likely, if Science had had its due share in the national councils that the taste and arts of England

would have had for their representatives the York and Nelson Columns, the Gothic Houses of Parliament, the discordant architecture and disproportionate objects which meet the view in Trafalgar Square, or the colossal figures on either side of the western entrance of the metropolis: one a copy of an antique figure holding a horse, which has been forced into the representation of a combatant; the other, an equestrian statue in repose, on the summit of a lofty arch.





